



THE NEW SUNDAY EXPRESS

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Muslims offer special prayers on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr at the Eidgah Maidan on Mysuru Road in Bengaluru on Saturday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA | PHOTOS: P2



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WITH THIS ISSUE

Two Tales of One City

PLUS 12 PAGES
MAGAZINE

POLL WALL

CONG ENDS CANDIDATE IMBROGLIO IN K'TAKA | P4
RACING AGAINST TIME FOR VOTER LIST | P8

Loaded message in Iran attack on Diego Garcia

AGENCIES @ London, Tehran, Tel Aviv

IRAN was "unsuccessful" in targeting the joint UK-US Indian Ocean military base at Diego Garcia, a UK official source confirmed to AFP on Saturday, after the Wall Street Journal reported that Tehran fired two ballistic missiles at it.

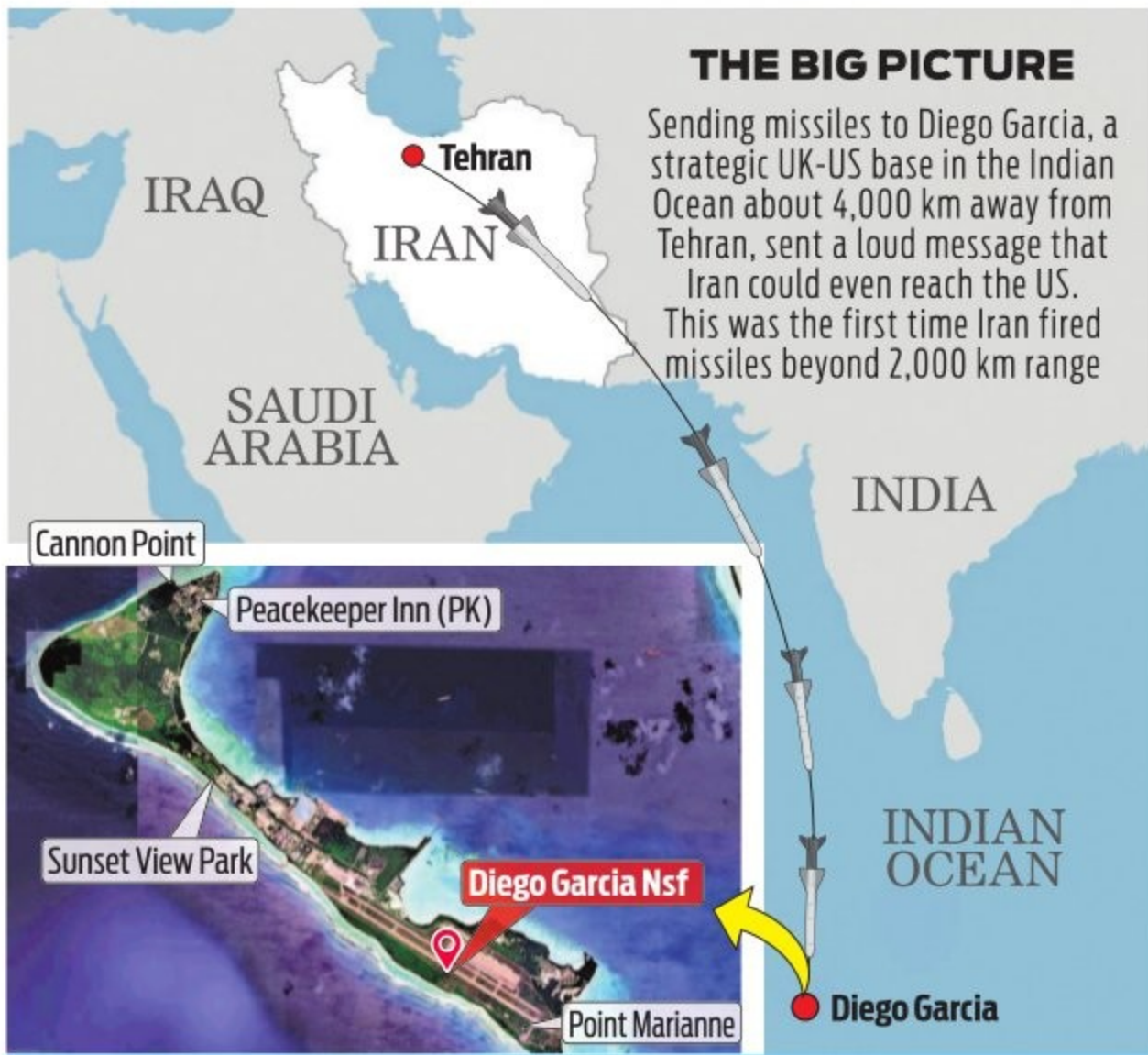
Diego Garcia, which is around 4,000 kilometres from Iranian territory, is one of the two bases the UK has allowed the US to use in this war.

The launch suggests that Tehran has missiles with longer ranges than previously thought. Iran has "always had missiles of that sort of range that we've known about, maybe not declared", former UK Royal Navy commander and defence expert Tom Sharpe told AFP.

The US military said on Saturday it had taken out an Iranian bunker housing weapons threatening oil and gas shipments in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's atomic energy body said US-Israeli strikes hit the Natanz nuclear facility, but "no leakage of radioactive materials" was reported.

In response, an Iranian missile penetrated the Israeli air defence and hit targets in Dimona city, Times of Israel said. The Simon Peres nuclear facility lies just outside Dimona.

The Revolutionary Guards said they "struck" an Israeli F-16 over Iran. Shortly after, Russian president Vladimir Putin said "Moscow remains Tehran's loyal friend."



THE BIG PICTURE

Sending missiles to Diego Garcia, a strategic UK-US base in the Indian Ocean about 4,000 km away from Tehran, sent a loud message that Iran could even reach the US. This was the first time Iran fired missiles beyond 2,000 km range

DAY 22 WAR WATCH

Commercial LPG supply

The petroleum ministry on Saturday increased the allocation of commercial LPG by an additional 20% to states and UTs, taking the total allocation to 50%. The ministry said the enhanced allocation would support restaurants and hotel industry.

Protect shipping routes, Modi urges Pezeshkian

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday stressed the urgency of protecting global shipping routes and critical infrastructure during a phone call with Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian.

In a post on X, Modi said, "Spoke with President Dr Masoud Pezeshkian ... condemned attacks on critical infrastructure in the region, reiterated importance of safeguarding freedom of navigation and ensuring that shipping lanes remain open and secure," the post said.

The PM said uninterrupted maritime movement is vital for global commerce.

CASE BOOKED

T'kuru official, retiring soon, ends own life, blames senior

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Tumakuru

A taluk-level officer with the social welfare department died by suicide late on Friday night, allegedly harassment by his senior officer.

In a two-page letter, addressed to the Madhugiri deputy superintendent of police, the deceased, Mallikarjunaiah GE (59), has written in detail the harassment he was subjected to by his senior official for the last four years. As per his letter, the harassment was over money and the irregularities he exposed in the department.

Mallikarjunaiah, who was an assistant director, allegedly hanged himself from the ceiling fan after recording a video, in which he blames H Krishnappa, joint director, for his extreme action.

Mallikarjunaiah, who was to retire on March 31, was scared that his pension and other retirement benefits would be withheld over an old case of irregularities.

After Mallikarjunaiah's wife, Jayalakshmi KM, filed a complaint, the Pavagada police registered an FIR and booked Krishnappa on charges of abetment to suicide under Section 108 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Mallikarjunaiah hailed from Gudarlahalli of Pavagada taluk and is survived by his wife, mother and two sons. P4

Maska mein hai DOODH ANDAR

Amul Super hit butter!

Lamborghini spotted doing 'donuts' at Anil Kumble Circle



EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A white Lamborghini was spotted doing donuts (a manoeuvre where the driver spins either the front or rear of the vehicle in a continuous circle and creates smoke) at Anil Kumble Circle on MG Road under the Metro flyover in the early hours of Saturday. A video, recorded by either a motorist or a resident, had tagged the Bengaluru Traffic Police seeking action. The video, posted on X at 7.57 am on Saturday, has gone viral. Along with the 10-second video, a photograph of the car, clearly showing its registration number KA-05-NR-0009, too has been posted on the social media site. P3

EXPRESS READ

AI to introduce cabin crew fitness policy

Mumbai: Air India is planning to introduce a health and fitness compliance policy for its cabin crew, under which those found overweight, obese or obese could face derostering and loss of pay. The compliance assessment will be based on the cabin crew members' Body Mass Index (BMI) | P8

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Marking the end of the holy month of Ramzan, observed through dawn-to-dusk fasting, Eid-ul-Fitr was celebrated with fervour and devotion as people gathered at mosques and Eidgahs to offer special prayers

EID FAITH AND FESTIVITY

1. Devotees offer prayers on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr at an Eidgah Maidan on Mysore Road in Bengaluru on Saturday 2. A young boy runs playfully past rows of devotees offering prayers at the Eidgah Maidan in Mysuru 3. Children play with toys in Bengaluru 4. People take selfies after their prayers in Mysuru 5. Children greet each other after prayers in Mysuru 6. A young girl shields herself from the sun with an umbrella at Eidgah Maidan at Kittur Rani Chennamma Circle, Hubballi | VINOD KUMAR, SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA, UDAYASHANKAR S, HEMANTH D

'POOR BETRAYED'

Street vendors term ban illegal, warn of protests

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE Karnataka Pragathi Para Beedhi Vyaparigala Sangha has strongly opposed the policy proposed by the state government and Greater Bengaluru Authority to ban street vending on arterial and sub-arterial roads in Bengaluru, calling it "illegal, unconstitutional, and a betrayal of the poor".

The organisation warned of protests if the policy is not withdrawn. The Sangha pointed out that the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, has not been fully implemented even a decade after its enactment. Surveys remain incomplete, many vendors have not been issued identity cards, and thousands are yet to be registered, it said.

It argued that penalising vendors under such circumstances is unjust. The proposed blanket ban is contrary to the law, which mandates that Town Vending Committees decide designated vending zones. These panels have not yet been constituted in the newly formed municipal bodies. Citing Supreme Court rulings, the Sangha said street vending is part of the fundamental right to livelihood.

It also maintained that vendors contribute to safer and more vibrant streets by increasing footfall and discouraging crimes such as chain-snatching and harassment. It attributed pedestrian issues to factors such as road designs favouring private vehicles, commercial encroachments, illegal parking, and unauthorised installations. It warned that relocating vendors to designated zones away from main roads would severely impact livelihoods, particularly for the elderly and vulnerable families who lack storage facilities or the ability to move heavy carts.

Park area shrunk by 5 acres in NPKL 4th Block, allottees object

INDRA S @Bengaluru

NADAPRABHU Kempegowda Layout (NPKL) site allottees have raised concern over a reduction in reserved park and open spaces in the revised layout plan proposed by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA). As per the 2014 approved plan, 40 acres were earmarked as park area in the 4th Block, which has now been reduced to 35 acres, prompting strong objections from residents.

According to the allottees, the layout plan approved in 2014 at the time of allotment had earmarked around 40 acres of park and open space in 4th Block, which was considered vital for the health, welfare and environmental needs of residents. However, in the revised plan, this has reportedly been reduced to 35 acres. When questioned, BDA officials reportedly stated that the authority is responsible only for ensuring the total reserved open space in the lay-



out, and not block-wise allocations agreed upon in the 2014 plan.

Residents argued that sites were allotted block-wise and that reducing park space in a specific block by five acres amounts to a violation of the conditions agreed upon during allotment. They pointed out that the 4th Block already has one of the least usable open spaces in the layout due to drain alignments and high-tension power lines criss-crossing the area, making large portions unsafe or unsuitable for resi-

dential use. They also said park and playground areas are being counted from non-ideal zones such as drain buffers, high-tension line buffers, areas around sewage treatment plants and near a graveyard.

Manjunath BS, an allottee, alleged that the BDA is planning to reduce existing park space in the H Sector of 4th Block for road widening, even after a five-acre reduction, raising suspicions that the changes could benefit real estate or vested interests. He also claimed that prime park land has been converted into civic amenity (CA) sites for commercial use, while park reservations have been shifted to less usable zones.

The allottees have submitted a formal request to the BDA, urging restoration of park and open spaces in 4th Block and other blocks in line with the approved 2014 layout plan, and have brought the issue to the notice of the BDA commissioner.

BWSSB offers 3-month settlement option to defaulters from April

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

BANGALORE Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) will launch a three-month One-Time Settlement (OTS) scheme, waiving the interest amount on outstanding water bills, from April.

In a statement issued here, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, who is also Bengaluru Development Minister, said the scheme will help over 5.11 lakh defaulters with dues amounting to Rs 851.33 crore. Under the scheme, if consumers pay the principal amount of their outstanding bills, the accumulated interest will be waived. Of the 11 lakh consumers, 5.11 lakh have to clear their dues. Till February, the bill arrears stood at Rs 851.33 crore - Rs 539.43 crore as

principal amount and Rs 311.90 crore as interest, he said.

He said the interest accumulated up to April will be waived if the principal bill amount is cleared within the three-month period. He said the scheme will be applicable to all categories of consumers. Pending dues of government departments and institutions will also be cleared through account reconciliation.

To simplify the process, BWSSB will provide each defaulter details such as RR number; principal amount, interest waiver, and the amount payable. Payments can be made through BWSSB kiosks and its portal, and digital payment modes, the minister said. Urging the consumers to make use of the scheme, Shivakumar said that it will help improve BWSSB's financial position.



Google Map to guide voters to polling booths

RASHMI PATIL @Bengaluru

WITH a view to making it more convenient for voters and strengthening the electoral process ahead of Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) elections, the State Election Commission (SEC) has embedded Google Map into the Voter Service Portal. The SEC Commissioner, GS Sangreshi, said, "The SEC, along with GBA, has introduced a user-friendly Search Option on the Voter Service Portal (<https://gba.karnataka.gov.in/electoral2026/>). The tool enables voters to quickly access their electoral details, including their ward and designated polling station, online by entering the Elector's Photo Identity Card number (EPIC) number. They can see these details both in English and Kannada. More than three lakh people have already used the portal."

Sangreshi said, "Voters are requested to visit the Voter Service Portal to ensure the accuracy of their details to make the electoral process fair and transparent. In case of discrepancies, they can reach out to the EROs and BLOs for correction."

This time, the SEC is also using the Matrix application, a digital platform designed to streamline the collection, processing and verification of voter matrix data which is available for officials to view. Sangreshi said, "The applications' advanced validation mechanisms instantly detect overlapping voter entries across wards and polling stations, significantly reducing duplication errors which is a common challenge in large-scale electoral exercises. The app has features like real-time data synchronisation to ensure that updates are instantly reflected across the system, automated error detection and reporting, enabling quick corrective action and analytical dashboards, providing officials with insights into data trends and progress."

New processing plant boosts Bengaluru's waste-to-energy push

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

A new five-tonne-per-day bi-omethanisation plant was inaugurated in Koramangala on Saturday, strengthening Bengaluru's efforts to scientifically process wet waste and generate biogas. The addition complements the city's first eight-tonne biogas unit, which has been operational since 2018.

The plant was inaugurated by Transport and Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy as part of integrated solid waste management initiatives led by the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML).

Officials said that 12 biogas plants had earlier been constructed, of which six are currently operational. Each of these plants processes five tonnes of wet waste per day, collectively handling around 30 tonnes daily. The remaining six plants are proposed for renovation.

According to officials, one tonne of wet waste generates about 30 to 50 kg of biogas, with each plant producing nearly 200 kg from five tonnes. The gas is primarily used for captive consumption, while surplus is converted into electricity for street lighting.

At Ward 151, an upgraded 8.5-tonne plant supplies about 120 kg of gas daily to nearby hotels, generating approximately



Transport and Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy at the inauguration of new biogas plant at Koramangala on Saturday

28,400 per day at Rs 70 per kg.

In addition, four new decentralised biomethanisation plants are being developed, of which two have been completed, and two are under

construction.

Large-scale projects planned A major project is being planned in collaboration with GAIL Gas India for a 300-tonne-per-day plant. Further, a

1,000-tonne capacity facility has been approved at Kannahalli with a private partner; while a 50-tonne plant at Herohalli is already producing around 1,500 kg of gas, which is being converted into compressed biogas for sale.

With Bengaluru generating nearly 3,000 tonnes of wet waste daily, authorities aim to scale up biogas production under an integrated tender system. By-products such as sludge will be converted into liquid fertiliser for agricultural use.

Officials have also encouraged households and commercial establishments to install small biogas units, costing around 20,000, to promote decentralised waste management.

Brain development plays a role in conduct disorder in kids: Study

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

WHEN a child or teenager shows persistent aggression, repeated rule-breaking or serious antisocial behaviour, people tend to reach for familiar explanations such as discord at home, poor parenting, lack of role models, bad company, weak discipline, substance abuse etc. But two recent and major international studies; one published in 'The Lancet Psychiatry' in 2024 and a more recent one, in 'The Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry' (JAACAP) this month, suggest that this view is incomplete, and that biology has a meaningful role.

Conduct problems or disorder, characterised by a repetitive and pervasive pattern of aggressive and rule-breaking antisocial behaviour, are "associated with subtle, yet widespread alterations in brain structure", states the JAACAP paper.

Researchers for 'The Lancet' study had analysed structural MRI scans from more than 2,400 young people across 15 international cohorts, including data from India, through the Consortium on Vulnerability to Externalising Disorders and Addictions (cVEDA). "The central finding was clear but nuanced. Youths with conduct disorder showed widespread reductions in cortical surface area across multiple regions of the brain, particularly within frontal, parietal and temporal areas that underpin social cognition, impulse control and decision-making," said Dr Bharath Holla, associate professor of Psychiatry, National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences (Nimhans).

He along with former senior professor, Nimhans, Vivek Benegal had analysed and contributed Indian data to the global collaboration for 'The Lancet' paper. "Cortical thickness in the MRI scans was found largely unchanged, pointing to alterations in brain expansion and folding during later childhood rather than early prenatal development. The study also found smaller volumes in key subcortical regions including the amygdala,

hippocampus, thalamus and nucleus accumbens, structures critical for emotion processing, learning from consequences and reward sensitivity," explained Holla.

The JAACAP study, which drew on data from more than 14,000 children and adolescents across 18 international cohorts, including cVEDA from India, found that even milder levels of conduct problems were associated with small but widespread differences in brain structure.

"These associations included reductions in cortical surface area across much of the brain, as well as additional links with cortical thickness and smaller volumes in regions such as the amygdala and hippocampus. Importantly, these patterns were not limited to clinically diagnosed cases and were not moderated by diagnostic status, suggesting that the same neuro-developmental processes extend across the full range of behavioural variation," added the Nimhans psychiatrist.

The JAACAP study added nuance to the earlier (Lancet) findings. "Some associations differed by sex, with stronger surface area effects observed in boys, while certain thickness associations were more evident in girls. Associations were stronger at younger ages for some regions, highlighting developmental sensitivity. Unexpectedly, some brain-behaviour relationships were stronger at lower levels of callous-unemotional traits, underscoring heterogeneity in pathways leading to conduct problems," he explained.

"Taken together, categorical and dimensional findings converge on the same point. These are small but consistent differences in brain development. They are not diagnostic markers, but they do shift our understanding away from purely moral or social explanations," said Holla.

"The dimensional evidence is particularly important. It shows that these neurobiological patterns are present even before behaviour becomes clinically severe. This opens a window for earlier identification and preventive intervention," said Dr Benegal.



Dimensional evidence shows neurobiological patterns that are present even before behaviour becomes clinically severe, opening a window for earlier identification and preventive intervention

Vivek Benegal, Former senior professor, Nimhans



BEAUTIFUL BENGALURU

A GBA worker plants saplings on BGS flyover as part of Bengaluru beautification project on Saturday | VINOD KUMAR T

EXPRESS READ

Miscreants steal two gas cylinders from apartment in Madiwala

BENGALURU: At a time when the city is facing a shortage of LPG due to the conflict in West Asia, two scooter-borne miscreants have stolen two gas cylinders from the basement of a residential apartment complex at RC Layout in Madiwala. CCTV cameras have captured the miscreants taking away the cylinders. According to the police, the miscreants, wearing jackets and helmets, stole the cylinders from the basement of Sai Residency apartment complex on Thursday around 2.45 pm. The theft came to light when gas supply to one of the flats stopped. The theft was completed within five minutes. Efforts are on to trace the miscreants, the police said. The Begur police have registered a case. **ENS**

Car owner unknown, reg number under lens

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

IN the photograph, the car's sunroof is seen open, but no occupants are seen standing out.

The post read, "Video from last night in Bengaluru. Lamborghini KA 05 NR 0009 seen repeatedly doing donuts at a public junction under a flyover while other vehicles were present, posing a safety risk". Another netizen replied that it must be an unregistered vehicle as the number does not throw up any results on the NetGen mParivahan, a government-run website and app.

"A suo motu case has been registered by the jurisdictional Cubbon Park traffic police. The luxury sports car was caught on camera drifting and posing a threat to other motorists at the Anil Kumble Circle junction on MG Road between 2 am and 3 am. We are checking the details of the car's owner. We are also probing if a fake registration number was used. A letter will be sent to the Transport Department recommending cancellation of the registration certificate," said an officer. The officers are also checking whether the car owner has insured the vehicle or evaded it as is done by most owners of such high-end luxury cars.

"We checked the CCTV footage from the vicinity. There seems to be two people sitting inside the car. Nobody was standing out of the sunroof. Details of the car's registration number are being checked," the officer said. A case of rash driving on a public way under Section 281 of BNS has been registered against the unknown car owner.

4-yr-old girl dies in front of mom as truck rams her

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@ Bengaluru

A four-year-old girl died in front of her mother in a road accident at Hanumanthagowdanapalya in Madanayakanahalli area on Saturday morning.

The woman was going with her two children to a nearby temple, when a goods carrier, moving at high speeds on a narrow lane, knocked down the girl. The four-year-old, Nishika, was holding her mother Lavanya's hand and walking next to her, while the mother was carrying the other child in her arms when the accident occurred.

Nishika, who used to go to an anganwadi, was the eldest daughter of Rajendra, 35, and Lavanya, 30, who are residents of Dasanapura. Lavanya was going to the Sri Anjaneya Temple in Adakamaranahalli at Dasanapura with Nishika and

her son. The accident killed Nishika on the spot.

"I was taking both my children to the temple in Adakamaranahalli. The lorry driver came on the road suddenly and ran over my daughter. I was holding my daughter's hand. She died in front of my eyes," Lavanya said.

Nishika's grandmother said Lavanya and the two children left home around 10.30 am. "Nishika was very dear to me. She came home regularly and spent time with me," the inconsolable grandmother said.

Infuriated by the accident, residents of the area broke the lorry windshield and assaulted the driver. The Madanayakanahalli police registered a case, detained the driver and seized the goods carrier, bearing registration number MH-04-HY-2203.

Nishika's body was shifted to the Nelamangala Government Hospital for the postmortem.



16-day kid undergoes robotic pancreatic surgery

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A 16-day-old infant diagnosed with congenital hyperinsulinism underwent a rare robot-assisted pancreatic surgery, following repeated episodes of severe hypoglycaemia posing a high risk of irreversible brain damage. The newborn weighing 4.6 kg, continued to experience critically low blood sugar levels despite being on high-dose intravenous glucose support, prompting urgent

referral and intervention.

The doctors identified a small focal lesion in the pancreas, responsible for excessive insulin secretion. The focal nature of the condition allowed for targeted surgical treatment, avoiding extensive removal of pancreatic tissue and reducing the risk of long-term complications.

Considering the complexity of the issue and the infant's age, the surgeons opted for a robot-assisted procedure to precisely remove only the

affected portion. The surgery was completed without complications or blood loss. The infant's blood sugar levels stabilised immediately after the procedure, eliminating the need for further glucose infusion.

The baby was closely monitored in the neonatal intensive care unit for nine days and showed steady recovery. The infant was later discharged on oral feeds with minimal medication. The procedure was carried out at Manipal Hospital Whitefield.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sri Ashok Nagarajan, aged 55 years, S/o. late Nagarajan S., residing at No.52, 2nd Cross, 1st Main, Opp: M. S. Ramaiah Kalyana Mantapam, Sunder Nagar, Gokula, Bangalore-560054 is the absolute owner of the Schedule Property. My client has neither sold, mortgaged, gifted, charged, exchanged, or created any kind of encumbrance over the Schedule Property nor entered into any kind of agreement to deal with the same. However my client has lost original Sale Deed dated 27/06/1983 registered as Document No.5701/1983 registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Sri Perambalur Taluk, Valarpuram Village, Chengalpattu District in respect of the Schedule Property executed by Smt. Vasugi in favour of Ashok (S/o. Nagarajan) minor, represented by natural guardian Mrs. Sarasa (W/o. S. Nagarajan) on 26/02/2026. A Police Complaint dated 27/02/2026 has been lodged with Bengaluru City Police regarding loss of the above document as per Lost Report No.2084100/2026.

Now the public at large hereby cautioned that my client will not be held responsible in the event of unauthorised and illegal use of the lost document in respect of the Schedule Property by any third party. Finders of the above document or any persons having any claim or asserting any kind of right, title or interest in the said property in any manner, shall lodge their objections or claims in writing with all supporting documentary evidence in person or by registered post with the undersigned within 7 (Seven) days from the date hereof and any claims submitted after the Seven days will not be taken into account. Thereafter my client will proceed with all future transactions without the original document stating that the same is lost beyond recoverability if not found or objected by the general public, and use the certified copies or photocopies to enforce the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY
Vacant Plot No.22, admeasuring 2730 Square Feet, in Survey No.447/B of Valarpuram Village, Sripurambudhur Sub-District, Chingleput District and Bounded on the North: Plot No.9, South: 20 Feet Road, East : Vacant, West Plot No.21.

DINESH MAHALE, Advocate,
F-1, Nandan Apartments, No.37, 1st Main Road, Palace Guttahalli, Bangalore - 560003. M No.09448949856

PUBLIC NOTICE

Date:22-03-2026
My client Mrs. Divya.C.S. Residing at #142, Parvathamma Nilaya, Channarayanaapalya, Doddabidarakallu, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore, Karnataka - 560 073, intends to purchase the Schedule Property from Mrs.Rajeshwari, Residing at No.402, SLV Anjanadri, 8th Cross, Sharadhamma Nagara, Jalahalli Village, Bangalore - 560 013. for valuable consideration.

WHEREAS the schedule property was purchased by Arun Gowda from the original land owner Mrs.Indumati R.Kirloskar, said Sale deed executed on dated 12/08/1994 registered as Document No.4381/1994-95, pages 154 to 157, Volume 5215, Book -1, on 21/10/1994, in the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore.

Further Arun Gowda executed Un-registered GPA dated 10/01/2003, in favor of her/his father Mr.VIRUPAKSHA GOWDA as my true and lawful attorney.The said sale deed was executed by GPA holder in favor of Mrs.B.R.Hemavathi Kumari, the said sale deed was registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar Dasanapura, as Document No.03196/2007-08, C.D. No. DSPD8, of Book no-1. And Registered in the office of the Dasanapura, Sub-Registrar, Bangalore North Taluk. The said sale deed was executed by GPA holder not by the original Title holder, hence with regard to that, proposed purchaser Mrs.Divya.C.S. has taking paper publication through affidavit certificate no.IN-KA13648143643341Y dated 21-03-2026 stating that, who claims any right, title or interest with respect to the schedule property should lodge or report such claim/objections in writing with supporting documents to the undersigned within 7 days (seven days) from the date of this Notice. Failing which, my Client will proceed with the said transaction, as if no such claims/objections exists or that they have been waived or abandoned. The objections/claims received after 7 days (seven days) will not be entertained.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY: All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Vacant corner Site No.171 (One Hundred and Seventy One), Old No.401, New V P Katta No.174/132/171, carved in Sy.No.14, 28/1, 28/2, 28/3, 28/5, 28/1 and 30. Converted for non-agricultural residential purpose vide Official Memorandum No.B.DS.ALNSR(N)131/1991-92, dated 03-12-1991 issued by the Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore Urban District, presently coming under the limits of Madanayakanahalli CMC, Situated at Chikkabidarakallu Village/Dhakale, Ravi Kirloskar Layout, Dasanapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore, Measuring East to West 45 feet or 13.716 Mtrs and North to South 30 feet or 9.144 Mtrs in all measuring 1350 Sq feet or (125.41Sq.Meter) and bounded on:- East by: Road, West by: Site No.194, North by: Road, South by: Site No.170.

Onesh Kumar B.C. Raju No.KA0242016
Advocate, No.31, 1st Cross, Vigneshwara Layout, Chikkasandra, Shattihalli Road, T.Dasarahalli Post, Bangalore 560 057, Contact No:- 951212395

FORM B - PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

(Regulation 12 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016)

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF M/s. SRIYA FARMS AND FEEDS PRIVATE LIMITED

RELEVANT PARTICULARS	
1 Name of corporate debtor	M/s.Sriya Farms and Feeds Pvt. Ltd.
2 Date of incorporation of corporate debtor	17th April, 2015.
3 Authority under which corporate debtor is incorporated / registered	Registrar of Companies, Bangalore
4 Corporate Identity Number / Limited Liability Identification Number of corporate debtor	U05000KA2015PTC079879
5 Address of the registered office and principal office (if any) of corporate debtor	No.208/B, 1st Stage, HBR Layout, 2nd Block, 80 Feet Main Road, Bangalore, Karnataka - 560043.
6 Date of closure of insolvency resolution process	16th March, 2026 [Liquidation ordered by NCLT on 17th March, 2026]
7 Liquidation commencement date of corporate debtor	17th March, 2026 [Order received on 20th March, 2026]
8 Name and registration number of the insolvency professional acting as liquidator	M/s. SPP Insolvency Professionals LLP Reg.no.IBBI/IPE-0143/IPA-1/2022-23/50033
9 Address and e-mail of the liquidator, as registered with the Board	M/s. SPP Insolvency Professionals LLP, 2nd Floor, CODISSIA, G.D. Naidu Towers,Huzur Road, Coimbatore - 641 018
10 Address and e-mail to be used for correspondence with the liquidator	Ph. No: +91-94888-10404 Mail to:sriya.liq@gmail.com / ipeadmin@sppgroups.com.
11 Last date for submission of claims	16th April, 2026.

Notice is hereby given that the National Company Law Tribunal, Bengaluru Bench has ordered the commencement of liquidation of M/s.Sriya Farms and Feeds Private Limited on 17th March, 2026.

Note : Applicable forms can be downloaded from the following portal: www.ibbi.gov.in → Resources → Downloads → Forms under IBBI (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016.

The stakeholders of M/s.Sriya Farms and Feeds Private Limited are hereby called upon to submit their claims with proof on or before 16th April, 2026 to the liquidator at the address mentioned against item No.10.

The financial creditors shall submit their claims with proof by electronic means only. All other creditors may submit the claims with the proof in person, by post or by electronic means.

Submission of false or misleading proof of claims shall attract penalties.

[In case a stakeholder does not submit its claims during the liquidation process, the claims submitted by such a stakeholder during the corporate insolvency resolution process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016, shall be deemed to be submitted under section 38.]

Date : 21.03.2026 CA Mahalingam Suresh Kumar
Place : Coimbatore Designated Partner and Authorized Signatory

M/s. SPP Insolvency Professionals LLP (IPE) acting as Liquidator of M/s.Sriya Farms And Feeds Private Limited
AFA No.: AA1/50033/02/300626/20056 validupto 30.06.2026

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KARNATAKA BYPOLLS: CONG ENDS CANDIDATE IMBROGLIO

It's Samarth for D'gere South, Umesh for Bagalkot; Surjewala holds meet with CM, DCM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE Congress leadership has overcome a crisis related to the selection of candidates for the April 9 bypolls, especially for the Davanagere South constituency, by ironing out the differences between Horticulture Minister SS Mallikarjun and a few Muslim leaders led by Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan.

The party also sent out a message that there were no differences between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who favoured a Muslim candidate, and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, who favoured the candidature of **Samarth**. Samarth is the son of Mallikarjun and Davanagere MP Prabha Mallikarjun. His

grandfather Shama-nuru Shivashankarappa's death necessitated the bypolls.

The AICC general secretary and Karnataka in-charge Randeep Singh Surjewala held a meeting with Siddaramaiah, Shivakumar, Mallikarjun and Zameer Ahmed Khan. The CM and the DCM sat side by side, sending a message that they had buried the hatchets.

Leaders from the Muslim community – legislators Rizwan Arshad, NA Haris and Naseer Ahmed and RS member Syed Nasir Hussain – as well as AICC Secretary Abhishek Dutt and Urban Devel-



opment Minister Byrati Suresh were also present.

It was decided to let Samarth contest as the party's candidate and please the Muslims with adequate representation in the government by way of appointment to boards and corporations and nomination as MLCs – in June, about 12 MLCs are retiring. Even in the Cabinet reshuffle, they are likely to get more berths, sources said.

The issue of Samarth jumping the gun to file the nomination papers much before the party's decision was also dis-

cussed in the meeting.

Now it is to be seen whether the show of unity of Congress' state leadership reflects on the ground as the Muslim leaders in Davanagere, especially the youths, are yet to come to terms with the decision, sources said.

The youths feel that once the constituency, which has a sizable Muslim population, was given to young Samarth, it will remain a stronghold of the Shivashankarappa family, putting an end to their political aspirations.

Meti's son is for Bagalkot

It has also been decided to field former minister late HY Meti's son Umesh from Bagalkot after Siddaramaiah took initiative to resolve the issue.



BJP candidate Srinivas T Daskariyappa takes the blessing of Prasannanda Swamy at Valmiki gurupet in Rajanahalli, Davanagere district, on Saturday

Shiv Sena to contest bypolls in Karnataka

The Eknath Shinde faction of Shivaseena will contest the bypolls in Karnataka. It has named Arun Kumar JR (Jadimutt) for Davanagere South and Mahalinganna Gunjagavi for Bagalkote as its candidate. They will file their nomination papers on Monday, said the party's state secretary MS Hareesh. A delegation including the party's state chief Sri Siddalinga Swamiji and organisational secretary Amamath met Shinde recently in Mumbai and got the go ahead. In the recently held local bodies polls in Mumbai the Shivseena and its alliance partner BJP had contested separately. **ENS**

Cops seek externment of BJP, Bajrang leaders, ten Muslim youth

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chikkamagaluru

THE district police have dispatched a letter to the Chikkamagaluru assistant commissioner recommending the externment of BJP Yuva Morcha District President Santhosh Kotyan and Bajrang Dal chief Shyam V Gowda, along with ten Muslim youth as they were implicated in various offenses, including disrupting societal harmony and inciting communal tensions.

All parties have been summoned to appear at the assistant commissioner's office on March 25 for an inquiry.

In response to the police action, BJP MLC C T Ravi said on Saturday that the party will steadfastly support the Hindu leaders, both of whom are Hindutva's champions against injustice.

"The police have issued a challenge to our party by serving externment notices. We accept this challenge and will contest it both in legal arenas and the court of public opin-

ion. The police should be ashamed of levelling allegations of extortion and behaving like thugs towards party workers with ideological convictions. This is a ploy reminiscent of Congress. It will be a futile attempt to intimidate us through the misuse of police power," Ravi said.

Regarding the Bagalkot and Davanagere by-elections, Ravi announced that candidates Veerabhadrayya Charantimath for Bagalkot and Srinivas Daskariyappa for Davanagere have been selected, both of whom are dedicated party stalwarts.

"The decision to nominate a party worker for the Davanagere seat conveys a profound message. It instills confidence in those party members who tirelessly strive for our cause. A palpable wave of public discontent against the ruling Congress is evident. The JDS will stand in solidarity with us. I will actively campaign in both constituencies and will also participate in the West Bengal elections as asked by the party," Ravi added.

Accused senior terms official's death suspicious

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

DEPUTY Commissioner Subha Kalyan told TNSE that district in-charge minister Dr G Parameshwara has been informed, while the social welfare department secretary will take disciplinary action against the accused officer.

In the video recorded just before his suicide, Mallikarjunaiah says, "My mother, wife and children have taken good care of me and made me feel proud. I was supposed to support them, but I am not able to do so. I wanted to do more for them, but I couldn't. It is because of Joint Director Krishnappa's harassment that I have taken this decision. Krishnappa will be punished by

God. Since he is a troublemaker, my family members need not seek revenge. He will be punished by God and by law."

He stated in the letter, "When I was joint director in Gauribidanur taluk, Krishnappa replaced me. I was transferred to Kunigal as JD and Krishnappa claimed that he did it as a favour to me and I should pay him Rs 3 lakh. But I had not sought transfer at all."

Though Mallikarjunaiah was transferred to Pavagada two-and-a-half-years ago, Krishnappa continued to harass him by sending him regularly to training programmes, sparing other officers who were paying heed to him. Though a case of alleged irregularities

was closed by the social welfare commissioner after a probe conducted by a retired judge, Krishnappa got it reopened to harass him, he claimed.

"Krishnappa also got an RTI activist cum a local monthly newspaper editor KR Manjunath to lodge a complaint again in July 2025. He advised me to pay Rs 3 lakh to close the case," he stated in the letter. Mallikarjunaiah also pointed out that Krishnappa did not release any funds to Pavagada, while allocating considerable sums to other nine taluks of the district.

On Saturday, Krishnappa countered the allegations by releasing a video. He claimed that a notice was issued against Mallikarjunaiah based on a

complaint received at the Bengaluru head office alleging irregularities. Two staffers were assigned to conduct an inquiry, which is yet to begin. He termed Manjunathaiah's suicide suspicious.

Since Congress took over in May 29, this is the second incident of a government official committing suicide because of harassment by higher officials and corruption. In May 2024, a superintendent with the Maharsi Valmiki ST Development Corporation, Chandrashekar N, committed suicide, accusing his seniors of harassment in the multi crore scam. Immediately after, MLA B Nagendra resigned as minister.



A flower seller at Gadag market waits for customers as prices hit rock bottom | EXPRESS

Unseasonal rain causes big loss to Gadag flower growers

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR @Gadag

FLOWER growers from Gadag have suffered huge losses after the region received unseasonal rain this week, affecting their prospects of earning well around Ugadi, which was celebrated on Thursday. Badly affected are Lakkundi, Kanavi, Hosur, Dambal, Kadakola and surrounding villages, from where loads of flowers are sent to Dharwad, Belagavi and other places. Farmers growing chrysanthemum, marigold and jasmine in these areas had spent lakhs of rupees on their crops and were expecting good returns this time. But sudden rain has dashed their hopes and pushed them into financial distress as flower crops that are sensitive to moisture have wilted.

Villages on the Kappatagudda foothills traditionally grow flowers and the floral crop cycles run throughout the year. Last Deepavali, floriculturists from here had earned good money as the prices remained high. Ahead of Ugadi, many growers had planted chrysanthemum, marigold and jasmine and wholesale buyers from neighbouring districts had promised them to make bulk purchases. But as the region received heavy rain four days

Hailstorm: Ashoka demands survey to assess crop loss

Bengaluru; Opposition BJP has urged the state government to conduct a survey soon to assess the crop loss due to the recent hailstorm in parts of the state. In his X post, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R Ashoka said according to reports, the hailstorm damaged crops in 56,000 hectares of land in more than 10 districts, leaving several farmers in distress. Ashoka said the BJP has also urged the government to ensure timely compensation to the affected farmers. The government should announce compensation to the kin of a farmer, who died due to lightning in Gadag district. Ashoka said in Dharwad, Haveri, Gadag, Kalaburagi and Vijayapura districts crops such as jowar, gram, wheat and maize have been damaged. In Hassan, Tumakuru and Chikkaballapur districts crops such as mango, jackfruit and watermelon have been damaged. A special package should be announced for farmers who have suffered losses due to hailstorm, he said.

back, the flowers have decayed.

Jasmine, which used to sell at Rs 300 per kg, was sold at Rs 150. Around Ugadi, jasmine is normally priced at Rs 500-Rs 700 a kg, but because of untimely rain this time, it hit the rock bottom. Marigold, sold at Rs 350 per kg on any other day, had to be given away at Rs 100.

Bashasab Mallasamudra, a shopowner at the Gadag flower market, said, "We used to get many orders from across North

Karnataka during festivals like Ugadi. But this time, the flower quality declined and the price also hit the bottom. Flower growers suffered a huge loss this time."

Akash Bhajantri from Kadakol said, "We were planning to sell marigold and chrysanthemum a day before Ugadi, but we received heavy rain and thunderstorms that affected the flowers. Flower growers across the Kappatagudda belt have suffered this time."

Religious event sparks protest in Udupi, 38 detained

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Udupi

TENSION prevailed in Udupi after members of Hindu organisations staged a protest opposing a religious discourse programme, leading to the detention of 38 protesters by the police.

Udupi district police stated in a release on Saturday that from March 20 to 22, a religious preaching programme -- Samadhana Mahotsava -- is being organised daily from 5.30 pm to 9.30 pm at the Christian PU College ground near Mission Compound, under the jurisdiction of Udupi town police station.

The event is being organised by the Fellowship of Udupi District Churches under the leadership of its president. The High Court had permitted the event, following a writ petition filed before.

Pastor Mohan C Lazarus from Tamil Nadu has been invited as special speaker for the programme. Objecting to his participation, leaders of Hindu Jagarana Vedike and other Hindu outfits alleged that cases have been registered against him in the neighbouring state for "insulting" Hindu deities. They earlier urged the district administration and Udupi district police not to grant permission to the event.

Around 5 pm on Friday, protesters, led by the regional functionaries of Hindu Jagarana Vedike, gathered near Govinda Kalyana Mantapa, addressed the media, and then attempted to proceed towards the Christian PU College, stating their intent to reach the programme site. The police intervened and prevented them from moving ahead.

A total of 38 protesters were taken into custody and later released. In this connection, a criminal case has been registered against all 38 individuals at the Udupi town police station under Section 189(2) of the BNS and Section 112 of the Karnataka Police Act.



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah greets a leader from the Muslim community on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr in Bengaluru on Saturday | EXPRESS

EDU MIN ASKS VILLAGE OFFICIALS TO INCREASE ADMISSION RATES

Bengaluru; After frequent reports of low enrollment rates in government schools and undergraduate colleges across the state, Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa has written a letter to all CEOs of gram panchayats and district commissioners to take necessary steps to increase the enrollment rate in the 2026-27 academic year. The minister has instructed the officials to organise enrollment campaigns in each district, followed by a registration campaign where parents' and children's details will be recorded. They must also make door-to-door visits in each village in collaboration with School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) members, teachers and alumni. **ENS**

Mangaluru sailor stuck for 20 days at Strait of Hormuz recounts horror

DIVYA CUTINHO @ Mangaluru

A sailor hailing from Mangaluru, along with other crew, is stuck at the Strait of Hormuz, a critical maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, for the last 20 days in an LPG carrier bound to India amid escalating tensions between the US-Israel and Iran.

"We are under constant threat. The Indian Navy is guiding and helping to get us out, but the situation is getting bad. We see ballistic missiles and drones fly past us on a regular basis. I witnessed a ship struck by missiles at a close distance. I have transited more than 20

times, but this is the first time I am stuck so badly," said the marine engineer describing the situation around the ship. He has been working with the merchant navy since 2010 and has requested anonymity for security reasons.

"Back home in Mangaluru, our families are worried and feeling helpless. It has been six months since I visited my family there. They are waiting for my return," the sailor said.

Describing the harrowing experience, the sailor said, "We were loading the cargo at one of the Middle Eastern ports, and in the middle of it, missiles and drones were falling about 200 metres from our ship. But we continued load-

ing as it is our duty, and that is what we are meant to do. Now, after a two-day transit to Hormuz, we are asked to anchor. The Merchant Navy ensures our country is self-sufficient in terms of energy reserves. It is a rare occurrence, and that is what we in the Merchant Navy prepare for all the time," the sailor said.

The large LPG carrier was about to transit this week, but due to the worsening situation with shelling and exchange of fire, it has been called to anchor, with the Indian Navy closely monitoring the situation as talks are underway at the diplomatic level to get the vessels out.

The sailor said they have a



Drones seen in a screengrab of a video captured by the sailor from his vessel at the Strait of Hormuz

stock of essentials, including food, drinking water and fuel, which is sufficient for a month, which they picked up on their way.

According to sources, a total of 22 vessels are stuck, of

which seven are LPG carriers. "Only two of them managed to get through earlier, and we were the third vessel supposed to exit, but the situation has spiralled disproportionately. The present LPG crisis in India is because the vessel we are in has not made it yet," the sailor said. The LPG shipment stuck at the Strait of Hormuz is expected to sustain the entire population of Karnataka, Kerala and Goa for 15 to 20 days. The voyage from the Middle Eastern countries to India usually takes 6 to 7 days.

The sailor recalled a similar situation when they were stuck at the Black Sea a few years ago. "During geopolitical conflicts, merchant ships become

easy targets," the sailor said.

The GPS satellite has been blocked in the region, making it unsafe to navigate, and it is suicidal to sail without a navy escort. A few crew members have reported loss of sleep due to the fear for their safety, the sailor said.

"The support from the Indian Navy is keeping morale high. We are doing our regular work and keeping the morale of the crew members high. We keep the crew members occupied with more work than usual, along with recreation, including indoor sports. Morale among the crew members is high, and we are confident to make it safely to our homeland," added the sailor.

Talks on, AIADMK likely to get lion's share of seats

May contest from 170 seats, BJP may be allocated 30 constituencies

AGENCIES @Chennai

WITH nine days left for the filing of nominations for the Tamil Nadu Assembly election to commence, the seat-sharing parleys in the AIADMK-led NDA has entered a crucial phase and the lead party of the bloc is likely to retain about 170 seats, sources said on Saturday.

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami's New Delhi visit on March 19 has finalised the numbers and the party is likely to retain about 160 to 170 seats out of the 234 Assembly constituencies in the state. "This is to ensure that the AIADMK obtained a majority on its own to form the government," a senior party leader said. The party requires a simple majority of 118 MLAs to form the government on its own. Palaniswami, who heads the NDA in the state, has already set a target to win 210 seats and is being projected as the chief ministerial face of the bloc.

The BJP is likely to be allocated 30 seats, up by 10 than the number it contested in the 2021 Assembly election, while the PMK (Anbumani) is likely to be given about 17 seats. TTV Dhinakaran-led AMMK, the latest entrant to the NDA fold, might get nine, while former Union minister GK Vasan-led TMC will get three seats, an AIADMK source said. The smaller parties in the alliance will contest either on AIADMK's two leaves symbol or BJP's lotus



Workers busy making flags of political parties at a flag-making unit near Sullur in Coimbatore on Saturday | S SENBAGAPANDIYAN

NDA seat sharing talks only in Chennai, discussed strategies with Shah: Dhinakaran

NEW DELHI/CHENNAI: AMMK general secretary TTV Dhinakaran on Saturday said he discussed poll strategy to defeat the DMK in the ensuing Tamil Nadu Assembly election during his meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The meeting with the BJP senior leader did not revolve around seat-sharing, he said. They discussed how the NDA constituents should work in union in all the 234 Assembly constituencies and ensure the NDA's victory at the hustings. "He has given some instructions and advice. I came here for that," the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK) chief told reporters about his meeting with Shah. Dhinakaran said he met the Union Home Minister mainly for this purpose, and "seat-sharing will be finalised amicably within the next two to three days only in Chennai." AMMK chief said, "We will fight against the corrupt DMK government. People are with us. We will surely win and form the AIADMK-led NDA government in Tamil Nadu." PTI

symbol, source said.

"Our party senior and Union Home Minister Amit Shah is involved in the seat-sharing talks and already the initial round with Palaniswami has been completed," a senior BJP leader said. After Shah's talks with PMK leader Anbumani Ramadoss and AMMK general secretary Dhinakaran in the national capital to-

day, BJP Tamil Nadu election in-charge Piyush Goyal will arrive in Chennai to finalise the pact, he added.

During the 2021 Assembly election, the AIADMK, part of the BJP-led NDA then, contested 179 seats and secured 66 while the BJP contested 20 and won 4 assembly seats and entered the Assembly after a gap of two decades.

Dr Vandana murder: Convict gets life term

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kollam

A court in Kollam on Saturday sentenced G Sandeep to life imprisonment for the murder of Dr Vandana Das, nearly three years after the brutal incident shocked the state.

According to the judgement, Sandeep will have to serve a jail term of 32 years as punishment given under various sections charged against him, and the life imprisonment will commence after he serves that period. In effect, he will be in jail for his whole life, said public prosecutor Prathap G Padikkal.

Dr Vandana, a house sur-

geon, was stabbed to death by Sandeep at the Kottarakkara taluk hospital when he was brought there by the police for medical examination on May 10, 2023.

The Additional District and Sessions had on March 17 convicted Sandeep for various offences under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including murder and wrongful restraint. Pronouncing the sentence, Judge P N Vinod awarded the accused life imprisonment for murder (section 302), 10 years rigorous imprisonment for attempt to mur-

der (section 307), 10 years for voluntarily hurting using dangerous weapons (section 326), and another seven years for charges, including causing voluntary hurt, causing grievance to a public servant and destruction of evidence. He was also sentenced to a five-year jail term under the Kerala Healthcare Service Persons and Healthcare Service Institutions (Prevention of Violence and Damage to Property) Act, 2012. He was also slapped with a total fine of Rs 2.35 lakh under various sections.



"The court didn't pronounce capital punishment as it may have probably felt it was not a rarest-of-rare case," the public prosecutor said. "But we will appeal to the higher court demanding capital punishment for the accused," he said. Meanwhile, Vandana's parents are also in favour of moving the higher court.

Pronouncing the sentence, the court observed that the prosecution had successfully established the case through consistent eyewitness testimonies, medical evidence, and material records. It rejected the defence argument that the accused had mental disorder.

Bengaluru man harasses woman on bus, arrested

ENS @ Tirupattur

A 38-year-old daily wage worker hailing from Bengaluru, Karnataka, was arrested on Saturday for sexually harassing a 21-year-old passenger from North India. Police identified the accused as S Nagaraj (38). The incident occurred on Friday night



when the woman and Nagaraj were travelling in a private Omni bus from Bengaluru to Chennai. According to the police, he touched the woman inappropriately. She then complained to the bus driver and conductor, who informed the Natrampalli police.



Komarams at the Kodungallur Sree Kurumba Bhagavathy Temple perform the Kavuthendal during the Kodungallur Meena Bharani festival on Saturday | A SAMESH

POLL FALLOUT

RS polls: BJD sacks 6 MLAs for cross-voting

ENS @ Bhubaneswar

THE BJD on Saturday suspended six MLAs for defying the party whip and cross-voting in favour of BJP-supported Independent candidate Dilip Ray in the recent Rajya Sabha election. The decision was taken at the party's Political Affairs Committee (PAC) meeting chaired by BJD president Naveen Patnaik. Senior leaders Debi Prasad Mishra, Pramila Mallick, Pranab Prakash Das, Sanjay Das Burma, Sudam Marndi and Tukuni Sahu were present.

The suspended MLAs are Chakramani Kanhar (Baliguda), Naba Kishore Mallick (Jayadev), Souvic Biswal (Choudwar-Cuttack), Subasini Jena (Basta), Ramakanta Bhoi (Tirtol) and Devi Ranjan Tripathy (Banki). An office order issued by the party president said that they were found involved in "anti-party activities," including cross-voting in violation of the BJD's core principle of adhering to collective decisions. The action follows a detailed review of replies submitted by the legislators to the show cause notices issued to them.

Woman set ablaze by boyfriend in Thrissur

THRISUR: In a shocking incident, a woman who was in a live-in-relationship was set ablaze by her boyfriend in the wee hours on Saturday. Leena, 30, a native of Kannur, has been hospitalised with 50 per cent burns all over the body. As per the police, Leena's friend Sarath Vishnu, alias Thampuran Sarath who is also in his 30s, got into a quarrel over personal issues. It is alleged that when Leena tried to hang herself after the quarrel, Sarath stopped her first and then poured alcohol on her body and set her ablaze. Sarath, who also suffered burns, took her to St. James Hospital in Chalakudy. She was then shifted to Government Medical College Hospital. "It was the hospital authorities who informed the police. ENS

Woman, mother die by suicide after killing 3 kids

KOCHI: A mother and grandmother allegedly died by suicide after killing three children by giving them juice laced with poison at Vaduthala in Ernakulam. The deceased were Aswathi S Nair, 37, her mother Y Sreekumari, 59, and Aswathi's children - Keerthivan, 14, Karnivan, 4, and Akshitha, 2. The family, originally from Karode in Vilappilsala, Thiruvananthapuram, had been staying in a rented house at Green Garden Lane on Karshaka Road, Vaduthala. They were staying there to seek treatment for her son Keerthivan. Police said the bodies were about two days old when they were discovered on Saturday. The incident came to light after when the houseowner's relative and his son visited the house. ENS

EXPRESS READ

STATE BANK OF INDIA
Retail Assets Central Processing Centre - I, Basavangudi
No. 13/1, Bull Temple Road, Opp. Sri Rama Krishna Ashrama
Basavangudi, Bengaluru - 560 004, Tel: 080 - 25943668, 25943336 & 25943337,
Fax: 080 - 25943367, Email: mrgnacpc.zoban@sbi.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE
Under Rule 8(1) (For Immovable Properties)
HL:-39577976929 No:ROY/41153/HL/47 Date : 17.03.2026
WHEREAS, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of State Bank of India, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002(No.3 of 2002), issued a Demand Notice dated 03.07.2025 calling upon the borrower, Mr. Chandrashekar Singad S/o Mr. Durugoji to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.33,04,085/- (Thirty three lakh four thousand eighty five rupees only) as on 17-03-2026, and future interest at contractual rate from 17-03-2026 together with incidental expenses, costs, charges, etc.within 60 days from the date of the said notice.
The Borrower/Mortgagor having failed to repay the amount in full as mentioned in the Demand Notice is hereby given to the Borrower/ Mortgagor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this. as on 16.03.2026.
The Borrower/Mortgagor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the below mentioned immovable property and any dealings with the said immovable property will be subject to the charge Rs.33,04,085/- (Thirty three lakh four thousand eighty five rupees only) as on 17-03-2026, and future interest at contractual rate from 17-03-2026 together with incidental expenses, costs, charges, etc. there on.
The Borrower/Mortgagor attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.
Earlier Possession Notice issued is withdrawn.
DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
Schedule "A" (Total Site Area) : All that piece and parcel of undeveloped land property bearing Sy. No. 104/2 which measuring 1 acre with 1 gunta kharab, situated at Uttarahalli Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk in vide Conversion Order dated 18.05.2011 in order No. ALN(S)(U)SR10/ 2011-12, for residential use, issued by Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore of Item No. 1 whereas undeveloped converted land property bearing Sy. No. 104/3 which measuring 34 guntas, situated at Uttarahalli Village Uttarahalli hobli, Bangalore South Taluk in vide: conversion order dated 18.05.2011 in Order No. ALN(S)(U)SR8/2011-12. For Residential use, issued by Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore of Item No. II and whereas undeveloped converted land property bearing Sy. No. 104/4 which measuring 1 Acre with 1 gunta Kharab, situated at Uttarahalli Village Uttarahalli hobli, Bangalore South Taluk in vide: conversion order dated 18.05.2011 in Order No. ALN(S)(U)SR7/2011-12 for Residential use, issued by Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore of Item No. III which total measuring to an extent of 2 acre 34 guntas with 2 guntas kharab, which is subject matter of property and referred to as "composite schedule property" and bounded on : East by : Land of Sy. No. 106, West by : Private Property, North by : Land of Sy. No. 104/1, South by : Road and Private Property.
Schedule "B" (Undivided share) : An undivided share in the land of the Schedule 'A' Property equivalent to 369 sq.ft. with all right title and interest and ownership of the land in the total land of Schedule 'A' property.
Schedule "C" (Description of the Schedule C Property) : Flat bearing No. 103 in First Floor, measuring 1136 s.f. of super built up area and carpet area measuring 738 sq.ft. constructed over the Schedule 'A' property containing 2 Bed rooms, Kitchen, Dinning, Toilets, Living room, with one car parking bearing No. 103, in the apartment known as "DS-MAX SAVERA", together with an undivided share, right, title and interest of land as specified in 'Schedule 'B' property referred to above, along with water and electricity together with common areas such as passage, lobbies, lift, staircase and other areas for common use.
Sd/-
Authorised Officer
SBI RACPC, Basavangudi
Place: Bengaluru
Date : 17.03.2026

GOVT TOOL ROOM & TRAINING CENTRE
Rajajinagar Industrial Estate, Bengaluru-560 010.
Phone No.080-23157189, Fax: 080-23301683
Website:www.karnataka.gov.in/gttc e-Mail: gttc.projects@karnataka.gov.in
Ref. GTTC/PROJ/CONS/PMC/BID-159/2025-26 Date: 21.03.2026

TIME EXTENSION
E-Tenders was invited from eligible Project Management Consultants (PMC) with Third Party Inspection for the work of Supervision, Execution & Quality Control of GTTC New Projects. The last date for uploading documents on the e-portal: 20.03.2026 has been extended to 30.03.2026 up to 5:30 PM. Further details can be obtained through KPP Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> or on Helpline No:+ 91 80 23010900 + 91 80 23010901 during office hours.
Sd/- Managing Director

AUCTION NOTICE					
It is informed that the below mentioned Jewel Loan customers of our Bank failed to settle their loan accounts even after our repeated reminders and Registered Post with Acknowledgement Due to their registered address have been already sent to them. If the full loan amount is not settled on or before the auction date mentioned below, the pledged items will be auctioned at 11:00 AM on the specified date, or any subsequent convenient date, without further notice and as full satisfaction of the bank by public auction sale at the bank premises or at the E-Auction Platform. https://egold.auctiontiger.net .					
Auction Date : 27.04.2026					
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight	
17139631	N SHIVA MURTHI	BELLARY	51.68	50.10	
92724827	Masud Ahmad Badiger	BYADGI	66.30	65.80	
Auction Date : 27.04.2026					
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight	
15433651	RATAN YALLAMMANAVAR	BELGAUM	66.80	64.40	
Auction Date : 27.03.2026					
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight	
18034000	SHIVAGANGE SURESH	BANASHANKARI, BENGALURU	147.00	144.50	
18034019	PRIYANKA S G	BANASHANKARI, BENGALURU	107.80	103.20	
18033560	BASAVARAJU M	BANASHANKARI, BENGALURU	59.30	56.10	
14430481	RAMESH B	BASAVESHWARA NAGAR, BENGALURU	55.76	54.86	
14435875	S MAHESH KUMAR	BASAVESHWARA NAGAR, BENGALURU	40.40	37.50	
38831475	GIRIJA LOKANATH	KENGRI	37.00	30.00	
Auction Date : 27.04.2026					
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight	
18035285	VIDHYA	BANASHANKARI, BENGALURU	181.70	174.90	

WESTERN RAILWAY					
MATERIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT					
VARIOUS MATERIALS SUPPLY					
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No. S/14/2026 Date 16.03.2026					
S.N.	Tender No	Short Description of item	Quantity	T.O.D.	
92	22261428	Finger Contact and Flexible Shunt Assy	878 Nos	14-Apr-26	
93	22265004	Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 24 VDC Twin Beam LED Head Light	220 Nos	13-Apr-26	
94	04263622	Fire Retardant Fabric, Width 120 +/-2 Cms	18355 Mtr	13-Apr-26	
CORRIGENDUM					
Please read the quantity as "1755 Set" for the tender notice no S-13-2026 dated: 11.03.2026 at Sr. No. 88					
Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.ireps.gov.in and www.indianrailways.gov.in					
1238					
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16139874	RAJ KUMAR RAJPUROHIT	BENGALURU MAIN	129.00	110.50
16139881	RAJ KUMAR RAJPUROHIT	BENGALURU MAIN	114.60	104.20
16633475	JAYAMMA	JALAHALI, BENGALURU	59.70	52.00
38839735	PUTTU C	KENGRI	57.40	54.30
38837463	VIJAYALAKSHMI B RAMPUR	KENGRI	51.00	50.50
38837250	SREEDHARA R	KENGRI	23.10	21.20
Auction Date : 30.04.2026				
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight
18034842	GAJENDRA R	BANASHANKARI, BENGALURU	53.80	52.00
15537338	NITHYA MAHESHWARI T M	BASAVANGUDI, BENGALURU	25.40	25.00
14438207	ANAND GOWDA D	BASAVESHWARA NAGAR, BENGALURU	181.30	160.00
Auction Date : 27.03.2026				
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight
67233864	AMBIKA Y	SHIMOGA	11.80	11.60
Auction Date : 27.04.2026				
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight
20535680	SURESH	CHITRADURGA	15.00	15.00
22333737	DILEEP H	DAVANGERE	45.80	43.02
Auction Date : 27.04.2026				
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight
21331046	PRATHAP C K	CHANNARAYA PATNA	11.50	11.40
Auction Date : 27.04.2026				
Ref. No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Gross weight	Net weight
60132321	VEERESH	RAICHUR	35.80	33.80
60132358	SATISH KUMAR K N	RAICHUR	51.90	51.90
Place : Chennai Date : 20.03.2026 *DBS BANK INDIA LIMITED, is a subsidiary concern under full licence from DBS BANK LIMITED Singapore.				
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Authoritarianism is the norm in the human experience—it is democracy which is the exception—and it will always benefit from the exercise of violence and the inertia that characterises political endeavour

Ali Ansari

TRUMPFLATION: THE U.S. BREAKS IT, WORLD PAYS FOR IT

THE good news, if you please, is that the price of weight loss drugs Ozempic and Wegovy has dropped by 90 percent, thanks to expiry of the GLP-1 patent. The bad news is that the prices of pretty much everything else are on the way up and the value of savings is travelling down the chart. The world is now facing a classic double whammy—of access and affordability. And there is only one way to describe the phenomenon—we are suffering from Trumpflation!

Since his return to the Oval Office as No 47, Donald J Trump has tried retired ideas to rewrite definitions, rearrange terms of engagement and redraw contours of the world order. His tariff tactics upended global trade. Ironically, prices in the US inched up while China ended 2025 with a record trade surplus of \$1.2 trillion. The loss in the Supreme Court hasn't deterred Trump—old clauses are being arranged for his cause. Meanwhile, America's trade deficit is at \$900 billion, the fiscal deficit higher at \$1.78 trillion, and debt is at a record \$39 trillion. In 2026, Trump has set out to recast the equilibrium across geographies that happen to be oil-rich—first in Venezuela and now Iran.

The war in West Asia, imposed by the US and Israel on the world, is now three weeks old. The reasons for the war—beyond the word salads being served—seem vague and vacuous. The conduct of the campaign is turning out to be a chapter in the book on how not to! A fifth of global energy supplies pass through the Hormuz Strait and strikes on Iran were bound to trigger retaliation and choking of supplies. The US President claimed, "Nobody expected that. We were shocked." The surprise is incredulous as Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard and CIA Director John Ratcliffe testified before Congress that Trump had been warned about the fallout.

The US President came to power promising to ensure affordability. This week, average petrol prices at American pumps edged towards the \$4-a-gallon Rubicon and mortgage rates shot past 6.2 percent. Investors found themselves poorer as the S&P500 lost over \$1 trillion in market cap in a week, savers exited from exchange-traded funds as gold prices dipped below \$4,500 an ounce, and silver slid from the \$80s to the \$60s. Add to this the \$200 billion Trump has asked for to fund his war.

In India, a combination of shortage and higher costs has driven businesses to a pause, migrant workers to community kitchens or home, and gig workers to worrying about fuel costs and the economics of eroding volumes. Last week, investors lost over ₹13 lakh crore in a day as Nifty50 created a record for single-day fall on March 19. The next day, the rupee hit a record low at 94 to the dollar, creating a bearish spectre. In just three weeks of March, foreign institutional investors have dumped stocks worth over ₹75,000 crore.

The fear of inflation is global. The monetary committees of the US Federal Reserve, the Bank of England and the European Central Bank met this week. To use a term from ornithology, the doves who promised rate cuts have all turned into hawks, signalling rates will be higher for longer. US Fed Chair Jerome Powell virtually ruled out a cut, ECB Chief Christine Lagarde warned the outlook for inflation was up and that of growth down, and Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey said the war had put paid to the prospect of a rate cut and even warned about a possible hike.

The war and disruption of supplies have triggered what is being described as a molecular contagion. There are over 6,000 products derived from crude oil and natural gas—beyond fertilisers and feedstocks. Consider this. India is the pharmacy of the world, producing over 60,000 different variants. This requires access to active ingredients. Crude oil is a 'soup' of hydrocarbons that allows extraction of chemicals to produce medicines—for instance, the primary raw materials to produce paracetamol.

The molecular dependency is not limited to fuels that are critical for powering the economy. It includes a host of products including polymers and plastics, synthetic fibres, specialty chemicals, dyes, pigments, agri-chemicals, detergents, a wide range of textiles, construction materials and industrial coke. Each of the products then feeds into the services economy, creating what Adam Smith described as the confluence of invisible hands. Mind you, this is just the beginning of Trumpflation. The headline Brent crude price, which has shot up from under \$70 to over \$119 a barrel, shapes perceptions. But some prices are higher—DME Oman is over \$162 and Dubai above \$137. Jet fuel has shot up from \$80 to over \$200 (\$250 a barrel in Singapore), diesel is averaging above \$4.10 a gallon in the US, and in Rotterdam propane prices are at over \$700 per tonne. The IMF has warned that a prolonged war and higher level of prices will dampen job creation and growth.

Trump's moves are long on rhetoric and short on detail—his action frequently defeats the stated intent. The global economy is, effectively, being pushed into the trenches of lower growth and higher inflation. Trump has declared "obliteration" of Iran's facilities and "victory". Yet, his administration is moving thousands of troops for a possible next phase. Trumpflation will define 2026 and the time-tested caveat, "You break it, you pay for it", is effectively inverted. Trump breaks it, and the world pays for it!

TEHRAN BLEEDS GULF, NOT ISRAEL



POWER & POLITICS

PRABHU CHAWLA
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HISTORY'S wisest voices have always warned of war's hidden poison. "War is hell," American General William Sherman declared; yet, leaders still chase glory in its flames. Today, in the smoke of the West Asian cataclysm, those ancient cautions resonate with chilling urgency. As the US-Israeli campaign against Iran enters its third week, one unyielding verity emerges with stark clarity: Tehran has deliberately chosen restraint toward Israel and ferocity towards its Arab neighbours.

This calculated asymmetry is no mere tactical footnote. It unveils the regime's authentic objective. Rather than matching Israel strike for strike in pursuit of decisive military damage, Iran has unleashed thousands of missiles and drones upon the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain. Only a modest fraction has been directed at the Jewish state.

This stark disparity has ignited profound interrogations about Iran's genuine strategic aim. Is Tehran truly fixated on Israel? Or does its intent lie in eviscerating the Sunni Arab economies that sustain America's regional dominance? The Shia-Sunni schism, carved deep by decades of rivalry, may illuminate the choice. And why have the Arab states, despite enduring the brunt of this onslaught, refrained from direct retaliation? Ramadan has now concluded. Some analysts speculate whether a post-Eid counter-offensive might yet materialise. The war's inaugural salvos proved mercilessly effective. On February 28, US and Israeli forces eliminated Supreme Lead-

er Ayatollah Ali Khamenei along with Iran's political-military aristocracy.

Yet the regime endured. Khamenei's second son Mojtaba, a 56-year-old hardliner forged in the crucible of the Iran-Iraq war, was elected Supreme Leader. This meticulously pre-planned succession granted Iran temporary operational continuity far beyond the expectations of most Western analysts. Iran's Operation True Promise IV, initiated in the first week of March, has so far discharged roughly 220 ballistic missiles and at least 110 drones against Israel in successive salvos as part of a cumulative total that remains confined to the low-to-mid hundreds of ballistic missiles and drones. The civilian casualties in Israel range between 12 and 24 dead, with impacts registered in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Beit Shemesh, Ramat Gan, Holon and surrounding locales. The physical destruction has remained symbolic. Critical military installations have sustained only negligible impairment; the airbases continued full operations.

On the contrary, the Gulf narrative unfolds on an altogether different scale. The UAE alone has endured 314 ballistic missiles, 1,672 drones and 15 cruise missiles by mid-March. Kuwait documented over 120 missiles and 308 drones. Qatar confronted 127 missiles, 63 drones plus two Su-24 aircraft incidents. Bahrain absorbed 105 missiles and 176 drones. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states registered dozens more apiece. In the conflict's early phase, approximately 60 percent of Iran's ordnance targeted US bases and Gulf infrastructure rather than Israel.

The human and economic devastation inflicted upon the Arab world has proven incomparably more profound. Iranian drone and missile barrages have repeatedly assailed Dubai International Airport, the planet's busiest international gateway. Fuel depots were ignited. Flights were suspended or massively diverted. Luxury hotels and energy complexes sustained direct hits.

Qatar's Ras Laffan LNG facility suf-

fered extensive destruction, Saudi Arabia's Yanbu refinery and various Kuwaiti installations were also deliberately targeted. Global oil prices have rocketed beyond \$110. Tourism, a cornerstone of the UAE and other Gulf economies, has haemorrhaged an estimated \$550-650 million daily, with projections forecasting aggregate regional losses surpassing \$40-56 billion annually.

By striking the very nations harbouring US bases that facilitate Israeli and American air operations, Tehran seeks to impose intolerable economic and political burdens. It expects that it would compel the Gulf rulers to pressure Washington into cessation. The doctrine is anything but arbitrary. Strategists identify this as textbook asymmetric doctrine. It aims to inflate the cost of American entanglement by bleeding its Sunni Arab proxies rather than pursuing outright military supremacy over the far more robustly defended Israel.

This reality compels an even more disquieting inquiry. Is Iran's ultimate objective mere regime preservation through economic attrition? Or does an underlying sectarian calculus animate the disparity? Iran stands as the pre-eminent Shia power in the region. The Gulf monarchies remain overwhelmingly Sunni. For generations, Tehran has regarded these Sunni Arab states—above all Saudi Arabia and the UAE—as existential ideological and geopolitical adversaries. The enduring legacy of the Iran-Iraq war, proxy conflicts in Yemen, Syria and Lebanon, and the Islamic republic's self-styled "axis of resistance" have all been indelibly coloured by this primordial divide.

By systematically punishing the Sunni Gulf economies that normalised relations with Israel through the Abraham Accords, Tehran simultaneously undermines America's Sunni bulwarks and positions itself as the valiant guardian of the broader Muslim ummah against "Zionist-American aggression". Iran's ca-

capacity to sustain this campaign notwithstanding decapitation strikes is nothing short of remarkable.

Arab restraint, meanwhile, continues to perplex observers. Despite absorbing the campaign's most punishing blows, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and others have refrained from direct counter-strikes. The imperatives transcend seasonal considerations. These nations remain profoundly dependent upon the US security umbrella; their military doctrines prioritise interception over deep offensive projection across the Gulf.

Direct confrontation with Iran would court catastrophic escalation, annihilation of oil infrastructure and economic self-immolation. Ramadan's emphasis on restraint infused an additional layer of diplomatic delicacy; Gulf statements invoked Muslim solidarity. Arab foreign ministers convened in Riyadh, issued strong condemnations of the Iranian attacks and demanded immediate cessation. However, it stopped short of belligerent participation.

Talk of a post-Ramadan Arab offensive to "finish Iran" remains a speculation. Gulf leadership recognises that only American and Israeli power can meaningfully degrade Tehran's capabilities. They therefore absorb the punishment, rely upon US interceptors, and permit Washington to shoulder the offensive burden while their economies bleed.

The UAE has now issued an unambiguous ultimatum. Its leadership, in concert with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, has declared that sustained strikes imperil full-scale regional conflagration. Should Iran refuse to relent, the UAE retains the prerogative to strike back.

Iran's strategy harbours existential peril. It risks alienating potential Arab public sympathy and inviting deeper international ostracism as Trump's core alliance endures. As Mojtaba's inner circle entrenches itself behind the "mosaic defence" doctrine, and as the Gulf tallies its escalating billions in losses, Tehran is not destroying itself in this conflict. It is devouring the very economic architecture that keeps the Islamic republic afloat—global energy flows. War is never the right tool to save an identity. It becomes the tool that finally inhales it.



AFP

PHILOSOPHERS AT THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ



INTEREST FREE

SANTWANA BHATTACHARYA
Editor
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PHILOSOPHERS are not doing too well these days. Chomsky was defrocked and walked off the pulpit just before the war. Bombs fell on a Gandhi hospital in Tehran. The other day, the Iranian strongman Ali Larijani met his end—we read of his impressive bouts of Persian wrestling with Immanuel Kant to justify 'eastern' theocracy, like the poet Iqbal a century ago. In between, another sentence was left hanging when Jürgen Habermas departed from the scene.

Many say Habermas had already died months earlier, by philosophical suicide, when he refused to put Gaza on an equal footing with holocausts closer home, as a crisis of morality that put the world in peril. The limits of western philosophy seem as geographical as they are philosophical! The universal rights to life and dignity are not that universal after all, and seem to stop somewhere north of the Mediterranean.

It remains for us to rummage through the debris of ethical models and see what can be retrieved. Even in their failing, or especially in those moments, we can peep

under the hood of their thoughts, see all the inner wiring, and try to reverse-engineer a simpler but more serviceable model of use to humanity.

Habermas is one of those who put philosophy directly to the question of international law. There is irony in the fact that he has passed on when international law has broken down again, like a 1940s' model Ford after decades of rough use. A time when democracy is in crisis globally—both within national boundaries and across them.

He came out of a post-war Europe that had seen what happens when truth collapses under power. His answer was not heroic leadership. Germany had had enough of that by then. Nor was it blind faith in bureaucratic institutions insulated from people. It was something more difficult and demanding, but ultimately simple. Think of it like a telephone exchange.

At its root, his democracy is built around conversations. All his life, Habermas stood guard over the notion that reason, argued out in the open, creates and exerts its own power. What he called the "public sphere" was a space where citizens argue, question, justify. Not shout, not perform a theatrical role, certainly not intimidate—but argue in a way where the better argument has a chance. Reason, he felt, would hold things together when everything else is fraying. It would be the spirit that legitimises governments. If they listen to their people.

Look around, and in today's climate of noise and propaganda that sounds almost naive. Our debates—on television, on social media, among family—tick frequency rather than meaning. Everyone is speaking, few are listen-

ing. Positions are declared, like the Iron Dome, but rarely tested.

Yet, human progress has always come from dissent. India's own lapse into dogma is curious because its history of thought was quite clearly written at the picket lines. The 'Sad-darsanas' often exist in refutation of each other; the early Buddhist councils argued deeply about what the Buddha said and what dharma meant, Nagarjuna said meaning is nothing by itself, and the Jaina tradition said everything is meaningful!

Jürgen Habermas may have committed philosophical suicide when he refused to put Gaza on an equal footing with the Holocaust. But his idea of a 'public sphere' where citizens can argue with reason is more relevant than ever

The dramatic image of Socrates walking through Athens, needing people with questions, is another version of the same instinct. We wouldn't be where we are if Galileo hadn't directed his questions at the Church. Every society, at some point, produces these figures. And almost every society, at some point, crucifies them while eventually accepting their answers.

That's why Habermas, even when he feels slightly out of place in a new world order, also feels familiar. He is making a case for something very old. Out of place because his "communicative rationality" suggests that if conditions are right, people can reason their way to understanding. The real issue is that the

conditions are never right these days.

Ambedkar saw that early enough, cutting through the optimism. He understood that argument, by itself, does not level anything. You can have all the debate in the world, but if some voices carry more weight than others before the conversation even begins, the outcome is skewed.

With 21st century mass media, the problem has metastasised. The overwhelming majority of "communicative" actions out there are from media industries that are extensions of power. Western thought control, as Chomsky showed, is only a vastly more ingenious update of the Soviet-era version. The trusty old model runs well too. Tel Aviv has its own Iron Curtain, and it's doing well, thank you, even if its Iron Dome isn't.

But such a stance means you still fear the truth. Perhaps it's with Donald Trump's "Post Truth Social" that Habermas's communicative rationality breaks down utterly!

But Gaza—or the Jin Jiyan Azadi protests—give us ways to test Habermas. He had a conception of world citizens. Humans being invested with the right to life, liberty and dignity everywhere. Yet he feared a "world government", and left more than enough space for states to continue enjoying monopoly over violence within their boundaries. A philosophical Strait of Hormuz, perhaps, but we can see theocratic ships of all religious shades slipping through unmolested.

So he too has ended up too aligned with power, too insufficiently attentive to imbalance. Still, the present algorithmic capture of words makes his core method very relevant. How do we rebuild the "public sphere", this time globally? How do we talk to each other?

QUOTE CORNER



I just can't stop thinking about the uncomfortable parallels between Singapore and Dubai... Both are along strategic choke points—the straits of Hormuz and Malacca. Iran retaliated against the UAE for its US military support, and I can't guarantee China while invading Taiwan wouldn't do the same against Singapore.

Derek Grossman, professor at the University of Southern California

Thiel's entire action can... be read as a prolonged act of heresy against the liberal consensus: a challenge to the very foundations of civil coexistence, which he now considers outdated.

Father Paolo Benanti, technology advisor to the pope, on Palantir co-founder Peter Thiel hosting closed-door lectures in Rome on the Antichrist

When it comes to the moment to attack a trophy, take it and bring it home, that's when you need to step up and make a difference.

Mikel Arteta, Arsenal manager, before Carabao Cup final against Man City



MAILBAG WRITE TO

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Divide, rule

Ref: *A cartography of demographic angst* (Mar 21). The British had a tough time managing the northeastern states through diplomacy and political manoeuvres. The government of independent India followed a similar strategy by intermixing the Sixth Schedule and other, locally-mandated autonomous councils to demarcate the region's tribal areas in different manners. The Citizenship Amendment Act now deepens regional conflicts to further alienate the people.

Jayachandran C, Chennai

Congress sycophancy

Ref: *Tharoor, Tewari back government response* (Mar 20). Shashi Tharoor has become a hindrance to the Congress's sycophantic culture. Him speaking sensible things did not sit well with these elements who consider the so-called 'high command family' of Sonia Gandhi as supreme. Statesmanship is an

enigma among power-mongering leaders nowadays. For these leaders and their henchmen, only capturing power is the top priority. It is to be seen how far Tharoor will be tolerated by Congressmen.

V S Ganeshan, Bengaluru

Post-war innovation

Ref: *Rising cost of war* (Mar 21). Counter-intuitively, wars often motivate innovations that ultimately lead to human welfare once the military mayhem is over. Japan, one of the worst-affected countries in the Second World War following the US's unprecedented use of atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, introduced world-beating technologies like the bullet train in the post-war period. It introduced the train in 1964, even before two decades after the war. However, for such ideas to flourish, we must consider that Japan is almost corruption-free, which is not the case in a country like India.

Thomas K M, Muvattupuzha

Desperate measure

Ref: *Woman abandons 15-month-old son at a bus-*

stand (Mar 21). Did the poor hapless woman who is burdened with a debt-ridden family and a bed-ridden husband with an incurable disease have much choice? Her only option was to draw public attention to the fact that no one had addressed her private agony. Only after her act did the town-folk react, followed by the government machinery. Instead of blaming the woman, we need to blame ourselves for overlooking her suffering.

Raghavendra Rao Vuppu, email

Marriage equity

Ref: *Man told to contribute to household chores, can't treat his wife as maid* (Mar 21). Marriage is a social norm where equal participation of the partners is a prerequisite. Job pressure, upbringing of children, and care of family members put a lot of pressure on women. In most homes, women are treated as maids, doing household chores round the clock. The apex court has given a fair and correct decision in women's favour that goes with the changing times.

Abhilasha Gupta, Mohali

Ante-natal care

Ref: *37 year old dies two months after delivery* (Mar 21). It's unfortunate that both the mother and the child died. Pregnancy without ante-natal care can be high-risk because of higher chances of complication during the intra-partum and post-partum periods. Worms found in her wounds suggests post-partum sepsis, which could have been prevented had it been an institutional delivery.

Dr P S K Rao, Ottapalam

Good samaritan

Ref: *Two-year-old girl rescued from 50-ft well by neighbour* (Mar 21). It was an excellent job by Payyu Chowti to save two-year-old Bhuvini in Uttara Kannada's Sirsi. As a businessman, he was getting ready to travel to Bengaluru on work when he spotted the baby who had fallen in while playing, and got into the well himself to save her. Chowti did a really great job. Such readiness to help other people while risking own life should be recognised and rewarded. Kudos to Payyu Chowti.

Vishnu Murthy G, Bengaluru

Shah to table CAPF bill in House on Monday

Move follows SC directive to Centre to reduce IPS officers' deputation in forces, carry out cadre review in 6 months

SUMIT KUMAR SINGH @ New Delhi

EVEN as paramilitary veterans intensify their battle against IPS officers' deputation in the CAPFs, a grievance the Supreme Court upheld, Union Home Minister Amit Shah is set to table the Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, 2026, in the Rajya Sabha on Monday, in what is seen as the Centre's legislative pushback against the court's directive.

CAPFs include ITBP, BSF, CRPF, CISF and SSB. The bill seeks to regulate recruitment rules and service conditions for Group-A general duty officers and other officers across the CAPFs, along with related administrative matters.

The proposed legislation follows the Supreme Court dismissing the Centre's review plea in October last year against its May 23, 2025 verdict. The apex court had directed the Centre to reduce IPS officers' deputation in the CAPFs and carry out a long-pending cadre review within six months. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan rejected the

CONTEXT COMMAND AND CONTENTION

Bill cleared by Union Cabinet on March 10, 2026

Move seen as response to Supreme Court order on IPS deputation



TOP COURT ORDERS

The SC (May 23, 2025) ordered reduction of IPS deputation in CAPFs

MANDATED CADRE REVIEW WITHIN SIX MONTHS

Centre's review plea dismissed (Oct 2025) by Justices Surya Kant & Ujjal Bhuyan

DIRECTED SAG-LEVEL DEPUTATION POSTS BE CUT WITHIN 2 YEARS

CORE ISSUE

CAPFs (CRPF, BSF, CISF, ITBP, SSB) have **10 lakh** personnel

Cadre officers face stagnation as senior posts go to IPS officers on deputation

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE BILL

Seeks to formally regulate recruitment rules, promotions and service conditions of Group-A General Duty officers across CAPFs

Proposes a centralised legal framework for administrative control, covering postings, cadre management & related matters

Centre's review plea. Earlier, a bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan had directed DoPT to take appropriate action within three months of the receiving the Ministry of Home Affairs' cadre review report.

The court had directed that IPS deputation posts in CAPFs up to the Senior Administrative Grade level be progressively reduced within two years, citing stagnation among cadre officers as a long-standing

grievance. "Keeping in mind the twin objectives of service mobility of the cadre officers of CAPF ... Removing stagnation on the one hand and the operational/functional requirement of the forces on the other hand, we are of the view that the number of posts earmarked for deputation in the cadres of the CAPFs up to the level of senior administrative grade (SAG) should be progressively reduced over a

period of time, say within an outer limit of two years," the SC had said.

It had said this step would bring in a sense of participation of the cadre officers belonging to the CAPFs in the decision-making process within the forces' administrative framework, thereby removing their long-standing grievances. The court acknowledged the Centre's position that IPS officers are vital for maintaining

the unique character of these forces, but made clear that neither individual IPS officers nor their associations could determine deputation quotas — those remain policy decisions of the central government.

The court lauded CAPF personnel for serving under demanding conditions while securing borders and maintaining internal security, noting that stagnation caused by lateral entry into higher grades adversely impacts their morale. On Friday, the paramilitary veterans had hit the streets making clear their battle against the bill goes far beyond ranks and promotions. The veterans from the CRPF, CISF, ITBP and SSB in a press conference said they are fighting for constitutional equity and a direct say in policies governing the CAPFs — forces that together deploy nearly 10 lakh personnel guarding India's borders, protecting strategic installations and conducting counter-insurgency operations.

"To put it bluntly, we do not have a lobby—our voices reach through imposed leadership," said retired BSF ADG Sanjiv Krishan Sood.

HOUSE PANEL

Fund for interlinking of rivers underutilised

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

A recent report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources has drawn attention to the underutilisation of funds allocated to the country's flagship Interlinking of Rivers (ILR) programme during the 2025–26 financial years.

Expressing serious concern over the slow pace of spending, the committee urged the Union government to accelerate project execution to ensure timely completion. According to the report, the National Water Development Agency (NWDA), which is responsible for implementing river interlinking under the National Perspective Plan (NPP) formulated in 1980, is overseeing 30 proposed link projects. These include 16 projects under the Peninsular component and 14 under the Himalayan component. The overarching objective of these initiatives is to enable the transfer of water from surplus river basins to deficit regions, thereby enhancing water availability in drought-prone and rain-fed areas.

The committee observed that fund utilisation during 2025–26 has been notably inadequate. While the Budget Estimates (BE) initially earmarked ₹2,400 crore for the scheme, this was subsequently revised down to ₹1,808.29 crore at the Revised Estimates (RE) stage. However, actual expenditure up to December 31, 2025, amounted to only ₹453.16 crore. Officials from the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation attributed the shortfall to multiple factors, including delays in the construction of the Daudhan Dam, sluggish progress in state-level components, ongoing canal renovation works in Uttar Pradesh, and slower-than-anticipated advancement in Madhya Pradesh.

The panel stated that it is "dismayed" by the fact that only about a quarter of the revised allocation had been utilised by the final quarter of the financial year. It noted that this reflects weak financial management and sluggish implementation under a scheme intended to tackle water scarcity, mitigate drought, and manage floods. In light of these findings, the committee recommended that the department, in close collaboration with state governments, adopt a more proactive strategy to expedite ongoing works. This, it emphasised, is essential for achieving efficient use of funds and ensuring that projects are completed within stipulated timelines.

Inadequate fund use

The committee noted that fund utilisation during 2025–26 remains inadequate. While Budget Estimates earmarked ₹2,400 cr for the scheme, this was revised down to ₹1,808.29 cr at Revised Estimates stage

Strategic importance

The report also underscored the strategic importance of the Modified Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal (MPKC) link project. This initiative merges the earlier Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal river link with the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project, with the aim of diverting surplus monsoon water from the Chambal basin to water-deficient areas in eastern Rajasthan

Sainik schools must focus on AI and cyber warfare



HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

STUDENTS of Sainik Schools, Rashtriya Military Schools and the Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC) should be motivated to pursue alternative careers not only in the armed forces but aligned with their interests and aptitudes such as defence research, innovation, design and medicine, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence of Parliament said in its latest report.

Currently, there are 33 Sainik schools and five Rashtriya Military Schools operating in the country.

In its report 'Review of Sainik Schools, Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC) and Rashtriya Military Schools' tabled in the Lok Sabha recently, the panel stated that Sainik Schools are established on expansive campuses and are equipped with well-developed infrastructure and facilities to impart quality education and comprehensive training. These institutions are intended to develop cadets into capable individuals who can serve as officers in the armed forces

in the future. Keeping in view the above motto of Sainik School, the government should make all-out efforts to increase the intake of the NDA cadets from Sainik School on a par with RIMC.

The students have been exploring diverse career options, influenced by wider availability of opportunities and personal interests. In this context, the committee is of the view that Sainik Schools, Rashtriya Military Schools, and RIMC must adapt to evolving aspirations and advancements, particularly in relation to the range of career choices made available to students.

"The committee emphasised that students should also be encouraged to pursue alternative career pathways aligned with their interests and aptitudes directly or indirectly related to national defence. The Committee is of the considered view that the time is opportune for students of Sainik Schools, Rashtriya Military Schools, and RIMC to be motivated to pursue careers not only in the armed forces but also in allied fields related to defence research, innovation, design, and medicine", reads the report. Through these schools and colleges, adopt a multi-pronged approach to build awareness and instill a sense of purpose aligned with students' interests from an early stage. Such an approach would ensure holistic development and enable students to emerge as responsible citizens and future leaders of the nation.

The panel has desired that the curriculum related to modern technology and warfare, such as the concepts associated with artificial intelligence, be included in it.

Ukraine drone scares Indian students in Russia

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

NEARLY 250 Indian medical students of the Bashkir State Medical University in Russia are presently seeking refuge in a school after a building next to their hostel was damaged in a drone attack by Ukraine on Saturday morning. The students were in panic as the under-construction residential complex subjected to the attack is only 150 metres from their hostel, located on Zaton Street.

Over 1,500 students are pursuing the six-year MBBS degree in this university, located in the city of Ufa in the Republic of Bashkortostan. The students reside in the multi-storied hostel blocks. The cheaper course fee as compared to India makes Russia a hot destination for doctor aspirants with nearly 10,000 students enrolled in medical colleges across the country with most of them from north India and a good number from Karnataka.

"It was 9 am when the attack took place. It was a normal Saturday out here with some sleeping or relaxing when an earth-crashing sound was heard. Fearing an attack on their building, those inside the dor-



Students' association requests MEA intervention

The All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA) has appealed to the Ministry of External Affairs to intervene. "The incident has caused panic and anxiety among students and their families in India. The safety and well-being of Indian students abroad must be treated as a top priority," AIMSA said in a fresh communication.

mitory (called Hostel 7) ran to the basement for cover. After some time, the students gathered courage to step out and understand that the top floors of the next door building had suffered a drone attack," a second-year MBBS student at the university told this reporter, requesting anonymity. "Since universities function on Satur-

day in Russia, half the students had already left to attend class by 7.30 am. They came to know of the attack only after they returned from classes," he said.

The hostel authorities later evacuated all the students from 'Hostel 7' to a neighbouring government school. "The students are being cared for there with food and all other necessi-

ties being provided," said a person familiar with the matter.

The internet connection there has got disrupted too. The All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA) has appealed to the Ministry of External Affairs to intervene. "The incident has caused panic and anxiety among students and their families in India. The safety and well-being of Indian students abroad must be treated as a top priority," AIMSA said in a communication.

The association also called for urgent communication with the Russian authorities to assess the situation and called for strengthening of security around hostels and student residences. As thousands of Indian students continue to choose Russia every year, the bigger question is whether the country remains a safe and well-supported place to study. In response to a question asked in the Lok Sabha, the MEA responded about the condition of Indian students and workers abroad. Data says there are 201 complaints from Indian students in Russia, while 27,222 Indians were enrolled in Russian institutions as of January 1, 2025.

Reset in ties as B'desh PM accepts Modi invite, Bhutan may be 1st stop

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

IN a calibrated diplomatic outreach, Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has written to his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, accepting the latter's invitation for a visit to India, signalling a broader push to reset bilateral ties after a period of strain.

However, sources indicate that Tarique Rahman may choose Bhutan for his first foreign visit instead of India, a move analysts view as a nuanced regional balancing act.

In his letter, Rahman struck a conciliatory note, calling for efforts to "reinvigorate our co-operative engagement" to ensure "peace, harmony and prosperity" over the long term. "I deeply value your kind reflection on the historic and long-standing relationship between our two countries," he added, noting that their people "share considerable commonality and enjoy a deep-rooted relationship."

The outreach follows a recent strain in the ties following the ouster of former Prime Minis-



ter Sheikh Hasina, which had injected uncertainty into Dhaka-New Delhi relations.

India, for its part, has moved quickly to signal openness to re-engagement. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla represented India at Rahman's swearing-in ceremony, a move widely seen as a signal that New Delhi remained open to re-engagement despite recent tensions.

Officials on both sides are expected to use diplomatic channels to firm up the timing and agenda of the proposed visit. Observers say the exchanges point to cautious optimism, with both governments keen to stabilise ties and rebuild mo-

mentum in trade, connectivity and regional security.

Earlier, Modi had congratulated Rahman on leading the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) to a decisive electoral victory, framing the outcome as a reflection of public trust. "I convey my warm congratulations to Tarique Rahman on leading BNP to a decisive victory in the parliamentary elections in Bangladesh. This victory shows the trust of the people of Bangladesh in your leadership," Modi said, adding, "India will continue to stand in support of a democratic, progressive and inclusive Bangladesh."

ATANU CHAKRABORTY

A CASE OF MISFIRE RATHER THAN A MISFIT

DIPAK MONDAL



WHEN former top bureaucrat of the Union finance ministry Atanu Chakraborty resigned as the non-executive chairman of HDFC Bank on Wednesday, markets bought into the message of his resignation letter with a momentous fall. In two days after his mention of "values and ethics" in the letter, the bank lost around ₹1 lakh crore in its market value. The fall could either signify Chakraborty's stature as a bureaucrat or a structural problem in the country's second largest lender, or both.

The jury is still out on what caused Chakraborty's outburst. His succinct—but sharply worded—resignation letter has stunned observers. Was it a case of dissent at the top or a deliberate push towards cleaning the labyrinth of corporate decision making, where mal-intent could lie latent for years?

Chakraborty took a step back as the controversy raged. He downplayed the content of his own letter, calling the episode "routine" and pulling back from the insinuations of ethical lapses. However, insiders argue, Chakraborty is no novice corporate leader who is learning the tricks of the trade. He was a career bureaucrat with experience at public sector undertakings and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

People who have watched him from Gujarat days know that such a career profile cannot succumb to behavioural impulses. What made the charge stick and lent weight to Chakraborty's opinion of the top brass at HDFC Bank was the bank's decision to sack three senior executives over a bond mis-selling case.

Chakraborty had joined HDFC Bank in 2021 after completing his stint as the Union finance secretary. He was at the top of the game in the government then and went straight to the top of the corporate leadership at the bank. Observers say the transition could have caused discomfort to some interests at the bank. He had been a secretary of economic affairs, which put him on the central board of the RBI and gave him direct exposure to the regulatory oversight of the banking system.

In the 35 years he gave to the Indian Administrative Service, he was tasked to intervene in petroleum, fertilisers, infrastructure, and fi-

nance sectors at the level of policy and regulation. As a 1985-batch Gujarat cadre officer, he spent nearly three decades in the state before moving to the Union government—first to the petroleum ministry in 2016 and later to the finance ministry in 2018.

With time, he built a reputation of being a capable administrator with a foot in the corridors of power in New Delhi. This profile and network strength equipped him with the moral and legal compass to spot intentional or unintended malfunctioning of any system.

Chakraborty's experience and exposure made his placement in the board of HDFC Bank a relevant fit at a time when it was contemplating merger with HDFC Ltd, which was billed as the one of the largest mergers in India's corporate history. Here was a man with a long stint

as a policy-maker and regulator, who needed to help a corporate behemoth navigate the world of government oversight. The merger was completed in 2023, and, in 2024, Chakraborty was given a three-year extension. However, it is not easy to fit in a corporate legacy.

Chakraborty, they say, may not have grasped the board dynamics and placed an exaggerated sense of importance to his mandate. "He came with a certain perception that his role was to fix what he saw as wrong," said one person familiar with the matter.

HDFC Bank's leadership has long prided itself on a culture of professionalism and continuity, and any attempt to disrupt that equilibrium was bound to create friction. Even Keki Mistry, who stepped in as interim chairman, has hinted at possible differences at the top. For now, Chakraborty has largely chosen silence. Whether he substantiates his allegations or lets the episode fade into the background remains to be seen.

22 NATIONS UNITE AGAINST IRAN HORMUZ BLOCKADE

Mostly European bloc, with UAE and Bahrain, urges halt to strikes on civilian and energy infra



Palestinian Muslims offer Eid al-Fitr prayers amid the rubble of destroyed buildings in Jabaliya, Gaza Strip | AP

DUBAI

MORE than 20 countries on Saturday said they would contribute to efforts ensuring safe passage in the Strait of Hormuz, condemning Iran's closure of the vital waterway.

"We condemn in the strongest terms recent attacks by Iran on unarmed commercial vessels in the Gulf, attacks on civilian infrastructure including oil and gas installations, and the de facto closure of the Strait of Hormuz by Iranian forces," said the 22 countries, mostly European but also including the UAE and Bahrain.

"We express our readiness to contribute to appropriate efforts to ensure safe passage through the Strait. We welcome the commitment of nations who are engaging in preparatory planning," they said in a joint statement. From March 1 to 19, commodities carriers made just 116

crossings, according to analytics firm Kpler — a decrease of 95 percent from peacetime averages.

Iran's de facto blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 percent of the world's oil and gas normally flows, and the numerous attacks on oil and gas infrastructure in the West Asia, have sent energy prices soaring. "We call for an immediate comprehensive moratorium on attacks on civilian infrastructure, including oil and gas installations," the countries added.



Algeria, Libya in focus

Damage to Gulf energy infrastructure in the West Asia war has turned attention to Algeria and Libya as possible fallback oil and gas suppliers, but both have little room to ramp up output in the short term, experts say.

Since the conflict erupted last month with US-Israeli strikes on Iran, the Islamic republic has kept up retaliatory fire on Israel and

Gulf nations, including attacks on oil and gas facilities. The resulting concerns of a global energy supply shock have turned eyes towards Algeria, an oil producer and OPEC member that is also Africa's leading gas exporter.

Jordan reports 240 strikes

Meanwhile, the Jordanian army said on Saturday that 240 missiles and drones had targeted the kingdom since the West Asia war began last month, most of which were intercepted. "The total number of missiles and drones fired towards the kingdom since the start of the war has reached 240," the army said in a statement.

"The Royal Air Force successfully intercepted and destroyed 222 missiles and drones, while 18 missiles and drones were not intercepted by the air defences," it added. The military's media office, meanwhile, said 36 missiles and drones had targeted the kingdom over the past week.

AFP

Japan uneasy as Don flags Pearl Harbor attack parallel

TOKYO

SENIOR US and Japanese officials tend to shy away from anything but very careful public comments about Japan's 1941 sneak attack on US forces at Pearl Harbor: So there was embarrassment, confusion and unease on Saturday in Japan after President Donald Trump casually used the World War II attack to justify his secrecy before launching the war against Iran.

The Japanese discomfort was compounded by the fact that Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi was sitting awkwardly at Trump's side as he spoke. Partly, the reaction is linked to the crucial security and economic role that the US plays for Japan, its top ally in the region. Put simply, Japan needs to make sure the US relationship thrives. That's why Takaichi was in Washington.

But it's also a reflection of just how fresh the political debate about Japan's role in World War II remains here, even 80 years after its end.

Senior leaders, including Takaiichi, have argued that Japan has apologised enough for what happened in the war. Takaichi herself has recently hinted at visiting Tokyo's controversial Yasukuni Shrine, where Japanese war criminals are honored among the 2.5 million war dead. It is, however, somewhat startling for Japan to see these history questions spill over into a White House summit.

AP

Iran marks Eid; Khamenei absent

JERUSALEM: Thousands in Iran offered Eid al-Fitr prayers on Saturday against the backdrop of the ongoing war with the US and Israel. Supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei remained out of public view, with judiciary chief Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei leading prayers in Tehran's Imam Khomeini mosque, which was filled with worshippers. Russian President Vladimir Putin sent greetings, reaffirming Moscow's support and calling it a reliable partner as Iran faces mounting pressure during the conflict.

US sanctions eased on Iranian oil

FLORIDA: US officials said the Trump administration will temporarily lift sanctions on Iranian oil stranded at sea under a one-month licence, aiming to ease soaring prices. The move applies to shipments loaded by Friday and runs until April 19. It came as Iran threatened wider retaliatory attacks and the US deployed more forces. Hours later, Trump signalled a possible wind-down of operations. The war shows no sign of easing, with continued strikes disrupting oil supplies and fuelling global price concerns, while US goals remain unclear.

Two held over UK naval base breach

LONDON: An Iranian man and a Romanian woman have been charged after attempting to enter Britain's HM Naval Base Clyde in Scotland, home to nuclear-armed submarines. Police said the pair, aged 34 and 31, were detained on Thursday and will appear in court on Monday. Authorities did not disclose their identities or specific charges. The Faslane base, near Glasgow, is central to the UK's nuclear deterrent, housing Royal Navy submarines equipped with Trident missiles.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, the undersigned advocate on behalf of my client Smt. Lakshamma, W/o late Narasimha, Aged about 65 years, Rite: Heggarahalli village, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, and others late Durgappa S/o late Donappa, who died on 25.04.1985 at Rajarajeshwari, Jala Holi, Yelachenahalli, Bangalore Urban District, if any Sri parties who have objections may dispute regarding the same can appear before the Hon'ble Pt. Civil Judge and J.M.F.C. at Devanahalli and the date hearing on 22.04.2026 at 11.00 A.M. in Civil No. 159/2026. By Order: Sri Chit. Secy. Ministerial Officer: Civil Judge & J.M.F.C. Court, Devanahalli Sri Chitkegowda, N., Advocate

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that SRI MUNIRAJU R. S/o late SRI RAMAIAH is the owner of immovable property mentioned in the schedule hereunder and he has lost the original Sale deed dated 08/06/1990 bearing Document No.246 / 1990-91, of Book-1, Volume No.1259, at pages 223-238, executed by Sri Rama Krishna Reddy A. in favour of Sri.Pavithran Nair K.T, registered in the office of Sub-registrar, Malur and Sale Agreement dated 01/02/2023 bearing Document No.10012/2022-23, Book-1, stored in C.O.No.1206, executed by Sri.Dasharathi Reddy K. in favour of Sri.Muniraj R. registered in the office of sub registrar, Malur and in case anybody having any claims or in possession of the said documents, shall inform the undersigned and handover the same within SEVEN DAYS from the date of publication of this notice. SCHEDULE & PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Site No.29, Municipal Khattha No.51/25/4850, situated at Railway Nagar, Malur Town, Malur Taluk, Kolar District, measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 30 feet, totally measuring 1200 sq feet and bounded on: East by : 25 feet Road, West by: Site No.34, North By : Site No.28, South by: Site No.30.

N. JAGADEESH KUMAR, Advocate No.30/1, 2nd Floor, 7th Cross, Near NR Colony-Bus Stand, Opp. Hotel Dewarika, Bangalore-560019, Cell # 9341261700.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the PUBLIC at large that the following original title deed/documents in respect of below mentioned SCHEDULE PROPERTY, have been lost/misplaced and are not traceable, by its present owners viz., SRI.MP Murali, MP Shashikala, Mahendra.MP, MP Ravi Varna, Sri, Prabhakar.M.P., and Sri.M.P.Mohan: 1. Sale Deed dated 27-03-1980, document No. 4446/1979-80, executed by Basavaraju in favour of Meenambal; 2. MDDT dated 23-07-1992, Document No. 117/1992-93, executed in favour of Shree Sudha Co-operative Bank Ltd; 3. Discharge Deed dated 01-09-1997, Document No. 1513/1997-98, executed in favour of Meenambal; 4. MDDT dated 09-07-1998, Document No.989/1998-99, executed in favour of Shree Sudha Co-operative Bank Ltd; 5. Discharge Deed dated 12-04-2004, Document No. 00153/2004-05, executed in favour of Meenambal; All the above mentioned documents are registered in the office of Sub Registrar, Sirimurugan, Bangalore. A Police Complaint was lodged before the jurisdictional Police Station by the present owners. If any person finds the above documents or has any claim, objection, or interest in respect of the same, they are hereby requested to inform and handover the same to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication. Failing which, it shall be presumed that no objections exist. My client shall proceed further to purchase the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE : PROPERTY bearing No.29, Old PID No.44-23-29, Ward No.137, (formed in No.102/2, of Bhogannahalli) situated at JAGUEEVENRAN NAGAR MAIN ROAD, GORIPALYA, BANGALORE, measuring East to West : 40 feet, and North to South : 44 feet, which is consisting of a building and the same is bounded on: East by : Property No.7, West by : Property Nos.9 and 10, North by : 40 feet Road left by Binny Mill Workers House Building Society; and South by : 7 feet Foot Path and Corporation Road leading to Goripalya;

H.G. RAJASHEKAR, Advocate, ABJITH ASSOCIATES, No.6, Tulsi Tholia Road, opp. UG Deluxe Lodge, Balepet Cross, BANGALORE - 53. Ph : 080 4113 9955, M : 9844639777, e-mail : raj.law@gmail.com.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client M/s. HINDUSTAN PETROLEUM CORPORATION LIMITED (Public Sector Enterprise) a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 and having its Registered Office at Petroleum House, 17, Jamshedji Tata Road, Mumbai - 400 020 and having its Regional Office at 1st Floor, BSNL, CACT, KR Puram, Bangalore-560016 represented by its Chief Regional Manager and Duly Constituted Attorney intends to obtain ownership rights over the property more fully described in the schedule hereunder to run and operate a petroleum retail outlet, from SRI.Nagaraja S/o Late Veerappa, SRI. Lakshmana Reddy S/o Late Veerappa, SRI. Manjunath S/o Late Veerappa for the location at Thatamachanahalli, Amankere Village, Vijayapura hobli, Devanahalli taluk, Bangalore Rural District, which claim and represent to be the absolute owner having clear and marketable right and title over the schedule property.

Any person's, financial institutions, firms or predecessors/s-in-title, Govt. authorities/bodies, banks, co-operative societies, having any manner of right, interest or title over the schedule property or any portion thereof, or the boundary or having any kind of objection to the transaction may contact the under signed counsel along with relevant documentary proof within 30 days from this publication, after which it would be construed that there is no objection whatsoever from any one and the said transaction would be completed.

SCHEDULE All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Old survey Number 5 S New Converted Survey No.5/2. Measuring an extent of 0.23 guntas. Situated At Thatamachanahalli, Amankere Village, Vijayapura hobli, Devanahalli taluk, Bangalore Rural District, Karnataka State East by : NH-44 (Survey no.5/1) West by : Survey no.1 North by : Survey no.6 South by : Survey no.5/4 CHANDAN B, Advocate OFFICE AT, Jishnu Garuda Nilaya, Near Gangavara Samudhaya Bhavana, Sodekoppa Circle, Nelamangala Town, Bangalore Rural, PH: 8722054869, Date: 22/03/2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client M/s.MAP ASSOCIATES LLP Rep by its partner Mr.R.Manjunath S/o Late B K Rajashekarappa, at No.283, Chinnaraj, 2nd Main, 4th Cross, R.M.S. 2nd Stage, Bangalore 560094 desirous of purchasing the Schedule Property from its owner Mr.Vijayashetty A N S/o.Late Nagappa Shetty at Anemahall Kasaba, Kasaba Hobli, Sakaleshapura Taluk Hasan District 571314. Any person or persons asserting any rights, title, interest or claim in the Schedule Property or any part thereof in any manner against the said owner or objecting such sale should write to the undersigned within TWENTY ONE DAYS of issuance of this Public Notice with all documentary proof on which they are basing and asserting their rights in respect of the Schedule Property, after which period our client shall proceed with the sale transaction on the basis that there are no claims whatsoever in nature on the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY Agricultural land bearing Sy.No.9/2 (Old Sy.No.9) situated at Honnasandahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Nelamangala Taluk, Bangalore Rural District measuring 3 acres 04 guntas and Kharab of 0.02 08 guntas and bounded on the: East by : Soladevanahalli Road West by : Property of Sri.Krishnanayak and others

North by : Property sold by Smt. Shankuntalamma from same survey number South by : Property of Sri Hanumanthappa

C.PSAJEEV & JAISRI.S.KRISHNAN, ADVOCATES, No.34 & 35, 1st Floor, 8th Main, 13th Cross, Malleswaram, Bangalore-03. Mobile Nos: 98452 00930 & 98807 48335 E-mail : Krishnan.jaisri@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client is intending to purchase residential site bearing No. 893, situated at Banashankari 6th Stage, 10th Block, Bangalore, in a layout formed by BDA measuring East to West 24 meters and North to South 15 meters in all measuring 360 Sq meters Bounded on:

East By : Road, West By : Site bearing No.895 & 896, North By : Site bearing No.894, South By : Site bearing No.892 from Mr. Ramesh P. Jain, aged about 54 years, S/o. Mr. M. Prakash Jain Residing at No. 941, Prarthana, 2nd Cross, Between 7 & 11th Main, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar, Bangalore-560 008.

Any person having any right, title, interest and claim whatsoever in and over the Schedule property or any liability, may lodge their claims/objections with documentary proof with the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication of this Notice, otherwise my client shall proceed to complete the Sale transaction as if there are no subsisting claims or objections and that all such claims or objections not filed in time shall be deemed / presumed to have been waived and shall not be binding on my client

Sd/- B. B. UMADEVI, Advocate No. 715, 1st C Main, 8th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore- 560 070, Mob. 934281827 Date:21-03-2026

BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL- I

4th Floor, Telephone House Building, Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore - 560 001

O.A. No. 648/2021

Between :Union Bank of India, Chandra Layout Branch, Bangalore. ...Applicant

VS

1. M/s. P.H.D. Enterprises
2. Mr.Chandrashekar B. G.

...Defendants

SUMMONS ISSUED UNDER RULE 23(VIII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES OF 1993, BY WAY OF SUBSTITUTED SERVICE

To:Defendant No. 2 :

Mr. Chandrashekar B. G. S/o. Mr. Gangaiah, aged 38 years, Residing at No. 3372, 7th Main, 2nd Cross, RPC Layout, Vijayanagar, Bangalore - 560 040.

Whereas, the above named applicant has instituted an application under Section 19 of the Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 against you for recovery of a sum of Rs.31,85,603/- (Rupees Thirty One Lakhs Eighty Five Thousand Six Hundred and Three Only) together with current and future interest costs and other reliefs.

You are hereby summoned to appear before this Tribunal in person or through an advocate or duly authorised agent duly instructed to show cause within 15 days from the date of publication or on 15.04.2026 at 10.30 AM as to why relief prayed for should not be granted. Take notice that in case of default the application will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand the seal of this Hon'ble Tribunal this 11th day of March 2026

Sd/- Registrar Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, Bangalore

Advocate for Applicant : R. K. Amarnath

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, the undersigned advocate on behalf of my clients 1) Mr. Nagaraj S/o Late. Sri. Thatthappa A, 2) Mrs. V. Chaya W/o Sri. T. Nagaraj both residing at No.421, 5th Main, 9th Cross, RMV 2nd Stage, Dollars Colony, Bangalore-560 094 do hereby issue public notice that the irrevocable power of attorney executed by my clients in favour of M/s Megamax Builders & Developers Pvt.Ltd., office at No.305A & B, Embassy Square, Bangalore-560001, Represented by its promoter Sri. Gopalakrishna R. Nayak dated 09.01.2026 registered as document No. BMH-4-00834-2025-26 of book-4 registered on 12.01.2026 before Senior Sub Registrar Jayanagar (Bommanahalli) Bengaluru, agreement of sale dated 05.08.2024 registered as document No.VRT-1-04296-2024-25 of book 1 registered before the Senior Sub Registrar Varthur, Bengaluru registered 06.08.2021 and supplementary agreement dated 09.01.2026 stands cancelled and terminated by virtue of termination / cancellation/annulment notice dated 21.03.2026, the general public are hereby cautioned not to deal with the notice schedule property with the said M/s Megamax Builders & Developers Pvt.Ltd., or their persons Mr. Gopalakrishna R. Nayak, Mr.Srikanth P. S/o Prasannakumar V, Mr. Vidyashankara C.R. S/o C.V. Ramu. In spite of this notice if anyone deals with the said M/s Megamax Builders & Developers Pvt.Ltd. or any one claiming through or under them with respect to notice schedule property they shall be doing so at their own risk, cost and consequences and the same shall not bind in any manner my clients.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY All that piece and parcel of land being residential undeveloped converted property bearing Survey No.115/2 (Old Survey No.115) situated at Byrathi Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk and now bearing Survey No.115/2, (Old Survey No.115) Byrathi in Corporation Ward No.54, Bengaluru, measuring 2 Acres in extent and bounded East by: Property bearing Sy.No.110, West by: Government Road, North by: Private property bearing Survey No.8, South by: Property bearing Survey No.115/1

KISHOR P.Y, Advocate, No.1152, 2nd Floor, 1st Cross, Vijayanagar, Bangalore-560 040 pykishor@gmail.com Mob: 9868987356

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Follow us on : @SCRailwaysIndia Details of the Tender Notices of S.C Railway can be seen on our website : www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

No. SCR-HQMech(PLG)/2026 (e-file: 531720) Date: 18.03.2026

PCME acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against Tender No. SCR/Mech/01/2026/ WP-LGDS Dt. 18-03-2026 closing date /Time 09.04.2026 at 15:00 hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored

SI. No.: 1, Item Tender Notice No: Item description: PCME/SCR/ Mech 01/2026/WP-LGDS dt. 18.03.2026, Tender No: SCR/Mech/01/2026/WP-LGDS dt. 18.03.2026, Name of the work: Supply, Installation & Commissioning (on turnkey basis) of Wheel Press capacity 500 Ton with computer based Measuring and Recording system as per Spec No. COFMO/WP/500/2021 Rev 0 with Industry 4.0 / Remote Diagnostic features at Carriage Workshop Lallaguda, Bid value Rs.: 2.44.58,104.08/- Tender closing date: 09.04.2026 at 15:00 hrs.

For further details please visit our website <http://www.irops.gov.in>

Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer/Secunderabad

SCR-HQMech(PLG)/3/2026 (e-file: 535330) Date: 18.03.2026

PCME acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against Tender No. SCR/Mech/3/2026/ 3PWL-ISWL dt.18.03.2026 closing date /Time 09.04.2026 at 15:00 hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored

SI. No.: 1, Item Tender Notice No: Item description: PCME/SCR/Mech/ 3/2026/ 3PWL-ISWL Dated 18.03.2026, Tender No: SCR/Mech/3/2026/3PWL-ISWL dated 18.03.2026, Name of the work: Supply, Installation & Commissioning (on turnkey basis) of CNC Portal Wheel Lathes (3 Nos) with industry 4.0 / Remote Diagnostic features at Wagon depot/BPA of SC Division, Wagon depot /DKJ of SC Division, Wagon depot /NLPD of GUNTUR Division and CNC surface wheel lathe (01 No) with industry 4.0 / Remote Diagnostic features at Carriage Workshop/Lallaguda, Bid value Rs.: 46,27,37,139.75/- Tender closing date: 09.04.2026 at 15:00 hrs.

For further details please visit our website <http://www.irops.gov.in>

Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer/Secunderabad

Tender Notice No.64/2026 Dt.20.03.2026.

Supply of Stores Items. E-Procurement Tender Notice:- The Following Tenders Have Been Floated Online. Tenders Are Requested To Visit The Website www.irops.gov.in And Submit their Offers Online. The Tender Description, Qty, EMD, SD May Be Seen In Website. Offers Submitted Manually Will Not Be Accepted. Offers By Post Will Not Be Entertained. Tender Closing Time Is 14.30 Hrs of The Due Date of The Tender. "For All Indigenes Offers, EMD Will Be Accepted Only Via Online System as Available on www.irops.gov.in

Tender No.	Brief Description
66265722	Track machine spares of plasser make
60265359	Procurement of composite Grooved rubber sole plates to RDSO Drg. no. T-8747
LN265039A	Road shunting vehicle of 135 T
10262975	Set consisting of two outer tubes
10263152	Set consisting of end caps
31253258C	Brake pad for trainset coaches
38263700	Body side stanchion. (Length-650MM)
30263442	Head stock Assembly complete
31263261	CTRB Bearing for VB Train set
56255193B	PLJF cable 80 pair x0.5mm
80261103	Inhibited mineral insulating Oil

Note: Due dates of tender opening SL.No.01 at dt.26.03.2026. SL.No. 02 & 03 on dt.06.04.2026. SL.No. 04 on dt.08.04.2026. SL.No.05 on dt.09.04.2026. SL.No. 06&07 on dt.13.04.2026. SL.No. 08 on dt. 16.04.2026 SL.No.09 to 11 on dt. 20.04.2026.

Corrigendum 1).Tender Notice No.62/2026 dt. 06.03.2026 Tender No56255393 due on 16.03.2026 Brief :Single Section Digital Axle Counter (SSDAC) phase Reversal type may be read as Due date 23.03.2026, instead of existing. Beside Above Mentioned Tenders There Are Other Tenders Having Value Above Rs. 50 Lakhs for details Please Visit Railway Website Above.

Principal Chief Materials Manager/ Secunderabad

Tender Notice No C/E/29/Elec/ SC/ 6/ROB /OT/2025-26 Dt.03/2026

For and on behalf of President of India, the undersigned invites e-tender for the given below work up to 15.00 hours on 13-04-2026

SI. No.: 1, e-Tender No.: C/E/29/ Elec /GS/SC/ROB /OT/2025-26 tender No. C-E-GS-SC-6/OT/2025-26, Name of work: GSU/SC : (i) SC Divn : KJZ-BPQ: Electrical Power supply arrangements including provision of temporary supply for diverted LC gate, Shifting /Modification of existing power line crossings in connection with Proposed construction of 2-lane Road Over Bridge in lieu of LC No.12 at km 344/18-20 between Hasanparthi Road – Uppal stations. (ii) SC Divn : KJZ-BPQ : Electrical Power supply arrangements including provision of temporary supply for diverted LC gate, Shifting /Modification of existing power line crossings in connection with Proposed construction of 2-lane Road Over Bridge in lieu of LC No.27 at km 317/4-6 between Bisugir Sheriff-Potkapalli stations, Tender Value Rs.: 37,91,50,14 EMD Rs.: 75800.00 CTF Rs.: 0.00 Completion period: 6 Months

1. Tender conditions/other particulars are available in the Tender documents on IREPS website at www.irops.gov.in which can be downloaded, can be participated and can view any modifications if any. 2. The tender notice is also played in the Notice Board located in the office of Dy.CEE(Gati Shakti), Secunderabad Division, South Central Railway, Secunderabad which can be seen on all working days. 3. The Railway reserves the right to cancel the tender without assigning any reason there to.

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/ A2730 Gati Shakti/Secunderabad

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at <https://www.irops.gov.in> or www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

ASIA MATTERS

Two held, Drugs worth \$2 mn seized

Immigration and Checkpoints Authority this week seized over 2 million worth of drugs from two individuals, *The Straits Times* reported. In the first case, a 29-year-old Malaysian was found with about 14kg of heroin at the Tuas Checkpoint on March 17, the report said. In the second case on March 18, a 29-year-old Singaporean was arrested for attempting to smuggle about 81g of cannabis through the Woodlands Checkpoint, the report added. The contraband seized were worth more than \$2 million and could feed the addiction 8,169 abusers for a week, as per the authorities.

Tourism sector under pressure

The Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry will hold consultations with the Finance Ministry to formulate measures to address impact of rising diesel prices on the tourism sector, *The Malaysia Star* reported. "The discussion will focus on the current situation and consider targeted measures, including temporary support to help ease short-term pressures, some of which are influenced by developments in the West Asia," Minister Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing said. The report said, the ministry is keeping an eye on the impact of rising diesel prices.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT MANGALURU DIVISION MANGALURU

Ref :PWD:TND:(58E): 2025-26/JE-3 Dated: 18.03.2026

SHORTER T

Govt raises commercial LPG quota

Ministry increases allocation of cylinders for hotels by another 20%, taking total to 50%

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

THE Union Petroleum Ministry on Saturday increased the allocation of commercial LPG by another 20% to states and UTs, taking the total allocation to 50%.

In a letter to states and Union Territories chief secretaries, the ministry said the enhanced allocation would support key sectors such as restaurants, hotels, industrial canteens, food processing units, community kitchens and subsidised food outlets, while also aiding migrant workers through targeted distribution.

The ongoing conflict in West Asia has disrupted supplies of LNG and cooking gas LPG, prompting the government to curtail supplies to commercial establishments like hotels in order to prioritise household consumption.

Earlier, about a fifth of supplies had been restored, followed by additional 10% allocation, which was linked to states expediting piped natural gas (PNG) projects.

Register for quota

The letter also stated that all commercial consumers must register with oil marketing companies (OMCs) to be eligible for the LPG allocation under the revised 50% quota. The OMCs have been directed to maintain detailed records of such customers, including their sector of operation, end-use of LPG, and annual consumption requirements in their respective databases.

Meanwhile, the OMCs are exploring the possibility of purchasing Iranian crude and awaiting government directions. According to reports, they are also seeking clarity from the US on payment mechanisms and other terms. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said a recent waiver could bring around 140 million barrels of oil into global markets, helping ease supply pressures.

The US had on Friday issued a 30-day sanctions waiver for the purchase of Iranian oil already at sea. As per the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the waiver applies to oil loaded on vessels on or before March 20 and discharged by April 19. This marks the third instance of temporary sanctions relief on oil since the start of the conflict, which has disrupted crude flows, particularly through the Strait of Hormuz.

According to reports, nearly 170 million barrels of Iranian crude are currently at sea. Iran was once a major oil supplier to India, but imports were halted after the US sanctions were imposed. At present, nearly 90% of Iranian oil exports are directed to China. India had imported 13.6 million tonnes of Iranian oil in 2015-16, which rose to 27.1 million tonnes in 2016-17, making Iran the country's third-largest supplier at the time after Saudi Arabia and Iraq.



The enhanced allocation would support sectors such as hotels, canteens, while aiding migrant workers

Petroleum Ministry

OMCS SEEK OPTIONS TO BUY IRAN OIL

● The OMCs are exploring the possibility of purchasing Iranian crude and awaiting government directions

● They are also seeking clarity from the US on payment mechanisms and other terms

● US Treasury Secretary said the waiver could bring around 140 million barrels of oil into global markets

Coal production exceeds 1 billion tonne in FY26

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

INDIA'S coal production reached the landmark of one billion tonne (BT) on March 20, marking the second consecutive year of achieving this milestone. According to the Union Coal Ministry, the feat underscores India's growing self-reliance in the energy sector and its commitment to ensuring uninterrupted fuel supply to key industries.

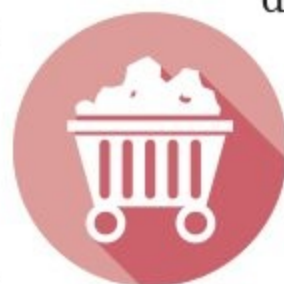
"This enhanced and sustained coal production level has enabled the country to effectively meet rising energy demands while supporting the power sector in maintaining record-high coal stock levels at coal-based thermal power plants. It reflects robust planning, efficient execution, and strengthened coordination across the value chain, thereby contributing meaningfully to the nation's economic growth trajectory," the ministry said.

"Aligned with the national vision of 'Viksit Bharat

2047', these efforts reinforce the government's resolve to build a resilient energy framework, enhance domestic production capabilities, and drive sustainable economic development," the ministry said.

Meanwhile, Power Secretary Pankaj Agarwal said India does not expect the ongoing West Asia crisis to impact its ability to meet surging electricity demand during the summer months. He noted that India has adequate coal supplies and growing renewable capacity to offset any potential disruptions in gas availability.

Gas accounts for only around 2% of India's total power generation. The country typically uses about 8 GW of gas-based power during peak demand periods or heatwaves. Agarwal added that sufficient solar power capacity is available to meet peak daytime demand of around 270 GW, while the Centre is accelerating battery energy storage projects to address evening demand.



New I-T rules tighten norms for foreign remittances

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

THE new Income Tax rules, which come into effect from April 1, have expanded the reporting framework for remittances to non-residents. According to analysts, the newly notified Form No. 146 has introduced enhanced disclosure requirements and greater alignment with regulatory and tax treaty provisions compared to the existing Form 15CB.

A key change is the detailed capital gains reporting framework, wherein taxpayers are now required to furnish transaction-level particulars such as date of acquisition and sale, full value of consideration, cost of acquisition/improvement, and computation of long-term and short-term capital gains separately.

According to Amit Maheshwari, Managing Partner, AKM Global, a tax and consulting firm, the new form mandates specific identification de-



tails of the remittance, including Permanent Account Number (PAN), if available, Tax Identification Number (TIN) in the country of residence, Tax residency certificate number and expanded address and contact details, thereby strengthening treaty-based verification and transparency.

It also introduces comprehensive banking and remittance channel disclosures, including IFSC, BSR code, and details of the authorised dealer, along with a requirement to specify whether the remitting bank and authorised deal-

er are the same.

Form 146 is a chartered accountant certificate required for foreign remittances. It validates TDS compliance and DTAA (Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement) guidelines before the remitter files an online income tax declaration.

The new rules have also formalised a tighter foreign tax credit process. Under Rule 76, taxpayers are required to file Form No. 44 (statement of foreign income and tax) and obtain CA certification. Certification is mandatory for all companies, and other assesseees whenever the aggregate foreign tax paid is ₹1 lakh or more.

"The rule also defers credit on disputed foreign taxes until the dispute is settled and evidenced via Form No. 45, bringing uniform, document-backed assurance to FTC claims. Certification in Form No 45 is also mandatory where certification was required for Form No 44," says Maheshwari.

EXPRESS READ

TVS Elec completes promoter transition

CHENNAI: TVS Electronics Ltd has completed a key promoter restructuring following the merger of TVS Investments Pvt Ltd into the listed entity, resulting in Gopal Srinivasan emerging as the sole promoter with a 59.71% stake. It comes pursuant to a Scheme of Amalgamation sanctioned by the NCLT on Nov 27, 2025.

Govt amends credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

THE government has modified the Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs (MCGS-MSME) to support manufacturers and exporters, allowing a 5% upfront contribution in tranches after the fourth year.

As per the revised scheme, the services sector has been included in the scheme, and the cost of equipment/machinery has been reduced up to 60% of the project cost from the earlier 75%, the finance ministry said in a statement. The credit guar-

antee would expire after 10 years, as compared to the unspecified period in the earlier scheme. The finance minister in a statement issued on Saturday said that under the revised scheme profitable units, with 25% of the turnover coming from exports in each of the previous 3 financial years and satisfying certain export realisation conditions are eligible to avail the scheme.

Guaranteed loan amount is pegged at ₹20 crore, and upfront

contribution is 2% of the loan amount, a maximum of Rs 40 lakh, with 1% cent each refundable in the 4th and 5th year of the guarantee period. Guarantee coverage is 75% of the amount in default, and the guarantee fee would be 'nil' for the first year and thereafter, every year, 0.50% of the loan outstanding.

The National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd (NCGTC) has operationalised the revised scheme since February 24. MSMEs contribute

around 30% to the GDP and over 45% to the exports of India, and give employment to over 35 crore workers. Achieving the vision of 'Viksit Bharat 2047' requires strong, globally competitive, and sustainable MSMEs.

The modifications are expected to facilitate increased availability of credit for the purchase of Plant and Machinery/Equipment by MSMEs, including exporter MSMEs, and give a major boost to the manufacturing and export sector in India, it said.

GURBIR SINGH

HERE has always been plenty of anecdotal chatter about high unemployment among graduates.

The more degree a person has, the less likely he is to land a job, is a meme that appears in common discourse. Education and a lucrative professional career rarely march together.

A recent report by the Azim Premji University on: "The State of Working India 2026" puts numbers to these anecdotes and reveals the problem of the 'brainy' class has gotten worse.

India, without doubt, is more educated today. Tracking the last 2 decades since 2004, the report says education opportunities have multiplied with the number of graduates increasing from just 10% among young people (defined as those of age 15 to 29) in 2004 to 28% in 2023. In absolute numbers, graduates tripled to 63 million in 2023 from 19 million in 2004.

However, the success of the education system has not been matched by the job-producing departments. While 50 lakh graduates were added every year, only 28 lakh jobs have been generated annually.

The data showed two-thirds of the unemployed youth are graduates, that is about 11 million, up from 32% or three million in 2004.

Put in another way: nearly 40% of graduates aged 15-25, and 20% of those aged 25-29, are jobless, far higher than among the less educated, the report finds.

Demographic dividend

Youth and education are a significant demographic dividend India enjoys. The country's young population is the largest in the world with 367 million in the 15-29 age group. It accounts for one-third of the working population. If this increasingly educated population is absorbed through jobs in the economy, the "demographic dividend translates into an economic dividend."

But the opportunity cannot be an open window. India's demographic dividend is projected to peak around 2030, with the working-age population share expected to decline thereafter. The coming years is therefore a critical period where the economy must absorb the skill

and vision of this 800 million-strong young workforce.

If slow job creation shuts them out, India will squander the opportunity.

The passion for higher education among the youth has been matched by institutional progress in the last 2-3 decades. Despite the barriers of caste, gender bias and income disparity, we have been churning out graduates by the millions. The report says since liberalisation, the number of higher education institutions has increased from 1,644 to 69,534. Student density has improved from 29 colleges per lakh youth in 2010 to 45 colleges in 2021.

Quality and standards have

tion rose from 8% to 17%.

Aspiration delays jobs

Graduate employment is slower and largely out of sync with India's turnaround on general employment. Over 640 million were employed in 2023-24, reflecting a net increase of 16.83 million jobs over six years. Unemployment has declined to around 3.2%-5.1% of the active workforce. The majority of job creation has been in agriculture, which generated 40 million of the 83 million jobs added between 2021-22 and 2023-24.

Simultaneously, we see a large exodus of youth from agriculture determined to make a bigger life than farming occupations allow. Young women in particular, not wanting to be relegated to self-employment, a euphemism for unpaid farm work, are leading the charge and entering the fields of IT, automobile manufacture and business support services. The financial attraction is understandable — graduate jobs pay averagely twice the amount of non-graduate positions.

The problem is employment seeking for young, salaried professions is aspirational. Fresh graduates don't go for the first job they spot, but hunt out positions they think suit their skill and pay them well. They therefore don't mind waiting. This exacerbates the 'unemployed' period, which could drag on till the graduate becomes 'realistic' and finally settles for a job he may have refused earlier.

Early joblessness, reflects an "aspiration-availability mismatch" combined with the ability to wait, says Rosa Abraham, the lead author of the report, in various media interviews. "Over time you mellow, build networks and take what you can", she added.

Another major factor is the vast numbers of unemployable graduates because of a "skill gap". As many as 46-50% do not reach basic industry standards, some studies say. Higher education produces more 'generalists' rather than persons with focused skills. Curricula is again behind the times, and not in step with advances such as AI and automation. Studies over past decades point in the same direction: a higher rate of unemployment among the more educated youth. But now the problem is spinning out of control as the number of highly educated unemployed is rising exponentially.



MANDAR PARDIKAR

NALCO organises all India vendor meet in Bhubaneswar

National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) recently organised an All India Vendor Meet in Bhubaneswar on the theme "Strengthening Vendor Partnership for Supply Chain Excellence." The meet served as a collaborative platform bringing together vendors from across the country engaged in the supply of raw materials, spares, consumables, and other essential inputs. It aimed at further strengthening coordination, enhancing transparency, and fostering long-term partnerships across the supply chain ecosystem. The programme featured presentations and interactive sessions involving key stakeholders including NSSHQ, MSME, RXIL, and Government e-Marketplace.



Mahatransco celebrates International Women's Day in Mumbai

Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company Limited (MSETCL) celebrated International Women's Day with great enthusiasm by organising various programmes at its corporate office. The event was presided over by Mahatransco Chairman and Managing Director Sanjeev Kumar. On the occasion, Independent Director of Maharashtra State Electricity Board Holding Company Vishwas Pathak, Director (Operations) Satish Chavan, Director (Finance) Trupti Mudholkar, Additional Collector and Executive Director (Human Resources) Suchita Bhikane, and Chief General Manager (HR), Mahagenco, Anand Kont were present. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sanjeev Kumar said that women have strengthened their position in various fields.

Business & Beyond

SBI organises sixth season of Green Marathon in Bhubaneswar with Radio Mirchi

State Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Circle organised SBI Green Marathon Season-6 in collaboration with Radio Mirchi at SOA University Cricket ground to celebrate the passion for environmental sustainability and better living for our future generations. AD Ratna Teja, CGM, Bhubaneswar Circle, Dr Vandana Aggarwal, GM-I, Bhubaneswar Circle, Kaushal Kishor Singh, GM-II, Bhubaneswar Circle and Samden Dorji Lama, DGM & CDO, Bhubaneswar Circle flagged off the run that witnessed close to 4000 enthusiastic runners. The Sunday morning in the SOA University cricket ground observed participants from across the city running 5,10,21 kilometres marathon, pledging for a greener future. Senior official of the bank also participated in the run along with other participants. All the runners were given organic T-shirts to promote clean and green city.

Awfis crosses 100 centres in South India, surpasses 70k seats

Awfis Space Solutions Limited (Awfis), India's largest flexible workspace solutions provider, has announced a significant milestone of crossing 100 centres across South India. The company's southern portfolio spans more than 3.1 million square feet of chargeable workspace area, with a total seat capacity exceeding 70,000 seats across Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Kochi. Awfis currently serves over 3,400 clients in India, of which 64% are MNCs, 25% are SMEs and mid-sized corporates, and the remainder are start-ups and entrepreneurs. The centres are strategically positioned across prime commercial hubs, IT parks, and business districts.



Paradip Port Authority conducts visit for Bahuda satellite port

Paradip Port Authority (PPA) has taken a significant step forward in the development of the proposed Bahuda Satellite Port, with its leadership conducting the first on-ground inspection of the project site at Chikiti today. The visit was led by PL Haranadhi, IRTS, Chairman, and T Venu Gopal, Deputy Chairman. This marks the commencement of on-site activities following the MoU signed in 2025 for the development of the greenfield deep-sea port. With a planned investment of ₹21,500 crore, the Bahuda Satellite Port is poised to enhance Odisha's maritime capacity and support growing trade requirements.



Kolkata Knight Riders suffered yet another blow to their pace resources with seamer Akash Deep ruled out for at least eight weeks due to a stress reaction in lower back on Saturday, which effectively sidelined him from the Indian Premier League. The injury has also put the right-arm pacer in serious doubt for the one-off Test against Afghanistan in early June.

It's not a homecoming but it would feel like one when the din of Chepauk greets new signing Sanju Samson for the first time as a home player; Given the TN-Kerala connection & his well-documented love for the canary yellow, this seems like a match made in heaven

SANJU — CSK'S NEXT THALA

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

MASSU. Weightu. Sceneu. Just three of many English words adopted by the public in Tamil Nadu after adding an u to the word at the end. What do they mean? They generally suggest something really cool or flashy. Not blingy but badass. Cool. In Chennai's blistering second summer of 2024, Tamil Nadu associated all of those to one movie. Lubber pandhu, a sports film with cricket at the heart of it. It was Chennai 600028 season again as the state fell in love because two of its biggest passions — cinema and cricket — merged to create magic on the big screen.

It wasn't lost on anybody that one of the film's main protagonists went by the name of Gethu. It was nominative determinism on point as Gethu was a swashbuckling batter whose pyrotechnics was well-known to the milieu (the movie is very loosely based on a real-life painter who moonlights as a cricketer in Tittakudi in Cuddalore).

In April 2025, a meme accurately captured the impact Gethu and this movie had on Tamil society. It suggested that he could be tried by Chennai Super Kings as the franchise's struggles with the bat up front was causing a lot of debate.

CSK listened. Kind of. They didn't hire reel life Gethu. They went and signed real life Gethu.

Sanju Samson.

Tamil Nadu and Kerala have shared a symbiotic relationship. Malayalam actors routinely cross the border to act in big movies in Tamil. Vijay's movies in Kerala generally run to packed houses for weeks. The politicians of the two states are cordial and frequently share the same roof. This relationship has helped the spread of colloquial Malayalam in TN and colloquial Tamil in Malayalam as well.

Thanks to this shared association, a lot of people from across the border support CSK (it perhaps helps that Kerala doesn't have an IPL side of their own). Stroll through Ernakulam or Thiruvananthapuram or Calicut and you are bound to come across CSK's canary yellow. Before Samson became a player for Rajasthan Royals in 2013, back when he was an aspirational cricketer in the small coastal town of Vizhinjam, he was one of those who used to wear the famous old jersey. He would also bring it with him whenever he used to play cricket in TN.

It's kind of why Samson, a few days after he was traded in by CSK, made it a point to talk about his love for the franchise. "In Kerala," he had said in a video put out by CSK a week or so post that trade, "there are a lot of yellow shirts. Tamil and Malayalam are very close.

Where I come from, there are a lot of people who speak Tamil. A lot of us watch Tamil movies. So there's a lot of excitement. When I was small, I liked to speak in Tamil. A lot of people (in Vizhinjam) have told me 'chetta, super decision'. Some have even told me 'I will wear Chennai because you will play for them.' I'm very happy (that I will play for them)."

It's not a homecoming but it would feel like one when the din of Chepauk greets him for the first time as a home player. For starters, the match-going public are already in love with him. They have been in love with him for years now. A few years ago, during an India A game against a visiting New Zealand team, Samson was the darling of the masses. Day-time temperatures soared over 35°C but for over 2000 people in the stands, watching Samson was worth braving the elements. 15 years ago, in

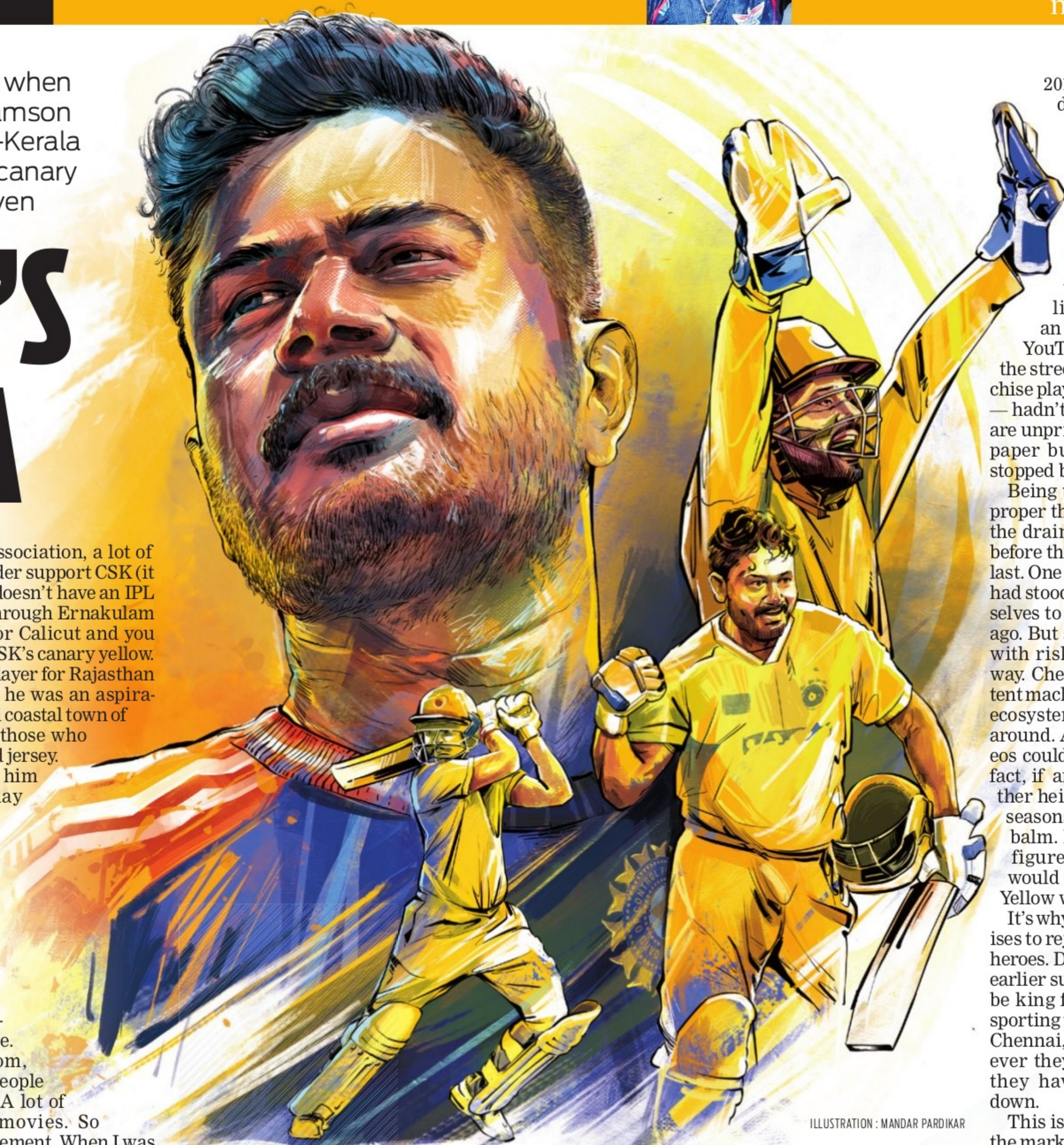


ILLUSTRATION : MANDAR PAROIKAR

2011, a scrawny kid had made his T20 debut in Chennai for Kerala in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. That particular match had no fans. These days, Samson is appointment viewing.

Over the last few years, the crowd at Chepauk during game nights had turned toxic on multiple occasions. A limp performance on the ground led to an outpouring of anger and grief to YouTubers and other content creators on the streets outside. Even MS Dhoni — a franchise player if ever there was one for this team — hadn't been spared. Most of the comments are unprintable because this is a family newspaper but the MA Chidambaram Stadium stopped being a happy place.

Being there used to be a grand experience, proper theatre. In 2025, it was akin to circling the drain. The joy had been sucked out long before the team closed out the campaign dead last. One of the league's most successful teams had stood still for a few years, tethering themselves to a winning formula from a few years ago. But standing still in this league is loaded with risk. Chennai found that out the hard way. Chennai had, in essence, become a content machine with the cricket part of the wider ecosystem when it's generally the other way around. And no amount of Dhoni-related videos could paper over the widening cracks. In fact, if anything, Dhoni's mere presence further heightened the tension in the stands. In seasons past, his mere presence acted as a balm. In 2025, he had become a polarising figure. One section of the other fanbase would whistle while another section of the Yellow wall would be seething with rage.

It's why Samson's addition to the team promises to rejuvenate a fanbase searching for new heroes. Dhoni is still the king in this den — his earlier successes have guaranteed that he will be king for as long as he wants — but most sporting teams need succession plans in place. Chennai, for so long, have ignored that. Whenever they have tried for internal solutions, they have ended up tripping and falling down.

This is the first time they have tried to go to the market for a new hero since all those years ago in 2008.

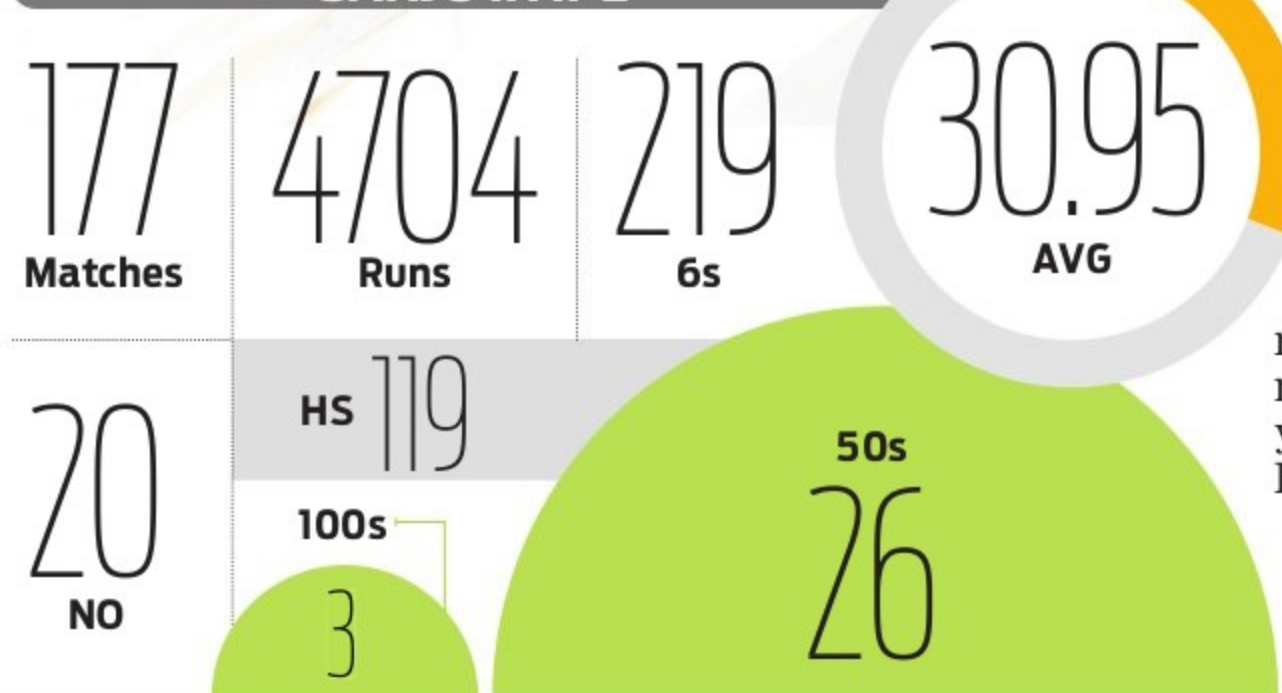
If Samson is given a choice about his ideal day, south Indian movies will dominate his day. It's why he's highly relatable for people from this part of the world, people who generally consume a lot of movies, either on OTTs or in movie halls.

He has also grown up feverishly memorising Rajinikanth dialogues and playing make believe Rajinikanth characters. A few years ago, he ended up visiting his 'Thalaivar'. Leader. The 31-year-old Samson has been leader for a few years now. The time is now ripe for him to be the all-action hero the public in these parts readily identify with.

3

He'll be wearing the CSK colours for the first time this season. The Chennai outfit will be the third team he'll be playing for in the league.

SANJU IN IPL



After year-long wait, CFC set for home challenge

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

AFTER a year and 13 days (378 days to be exact), two-time Indian Super League champions Chennaiyin FC return to the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, as they take on FC Goa on Sunday. After four away games on the trot, Chennaiyin will be eager to play in front of fans. A month ago, when the league began, the football ground in the stadium gained attention for all the wrong reasons. The grass had grown out of proportion, some parts of it withered. On Saturday, CFC head coach Clifford Miranda inspected the pitch, and felt that there is more work to be done. "The ground is not at its best (now). I have been coming here over the years, and was better then," he said in the pre-match press conference.

The Stadium — owned and managed by the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu — hosted major non-sporting events before and on the day the league started. temporary tiles and structures were installed on the pitch. Bringing it to optimum condition to play football, seemed a mammoth task.

Kerala Blasters suffer defeat

KOCHI: Samir Zeljovic, Bede Osuji and Dani Ramirez struck once each in the first half as Punjab FC defeated Kerala Blasters FC 3-1 for a third consecutive triumph in the league here on Saturday.

Bowls like Murali, inspired by Ashwin: Jarren's story

ASHOK VENUGOPAL @ Chennai

JARREN Bacher, 22, is part of the Chennai Super Kings camp as a net-bowler. Hailing from South Africa, the off-spinner was part of the Johannesburg Super Kings set-up in the SA20 which concluded earlier this year. Cricket runs in the blood of young Jarren. Grandson of Dr Ali Bacher, who played Test cricket and was a noted administrator.

The off-spinner explained how his bowling action is similar to Sri Lankan great Muttiah Muralitharan. "Yes, I bowl the doosra quite regularly. I have a similar action to that of Muralitharan in that I release it (ball) from

the back of my hand. I have hyper-mobility in all of my joints which allows me to bowl the doosra with a straight arm. So my stock delivery can come in or away just depending on the batter," he said at Guru Nanak college, where he was the chief guest of the inter-college cricket meet.

In a country that is home to great fast bowlers like Allan Donald, Makhaya Ntini, Shaun Pollock, Dale Steyn, Morne Morkel, Kagiso Rabada, Jarred was captivated by off-spin. He recollected the time when he chose to become an off-spinner. "I



Jarren Bacher

was a wicketkeeper batsman until 14 and there was a better wicketkeeper in my side and I was struggling to get into the team, so I took up bowling and I realized that my bowling was a little bit unique in that I could bowl the doosra and from there I sort of fell in love with bowling and stopped spending time batting," revealed the youngster.

He also spoke on his time so far at the CSK camp ahead of IPL 2026. "So far, I haven't bowled to Shivam Dube because he only arrived yesterday and same with Sanju Samson. I have spent a lot of time bowling to

Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ayush Mhatre, Sarfaraz Khan, Karthik Sharma as well as Aman Khan. It was a learning experience," he said, adding that he only had a brief chat with MS Dhoni. While he might imitate Muralidharan's actions, it is former Indian cricketer R Ashwin who inspires Jarren.

"He has been my hero from when I was 13. He is a fighter. He never gives up. Some people say he plays the game quite hard, but I like that. He has got this real never-give-up attitude. And I feel that batters fear him like they would for a fast bowler. I enjoy that aspect of his game a lot," said.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

Chance for Arsenal to break Cup drought

Arsenal are still alive in all four competitions and it's a chance for Mikel Arteta's men to break their title drought as they have not won any Major trophies since FA Cup in 2020.

Can City breathe new life in their campaign

Pep Guardiola & Co. have had an uneasy campaign so far. They are in the middle of a necessary rebuilding project. A win here would give City's new boys immediate fillip and restore confidence.

MAJOR BATTLE

MAN CITY STAND BETWEEN ARSENAL AND THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS AN UNPRECEDENTED QUADRUPLE IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL. A LOOK AT THE LEAGUE CUP FINAL...



Haaland and Semenyo vs. Arsenal backline

Erling Haaland scored a ton of goals to begin the season but he's in the middle of a rut. Antoine Semenyo has hit the ground running and those two attacking threats will have to be effectively marshalled by Arsenal backline.

- Haaland has scored 30 goals in all competitions this season
- Arsenal are unbeaten vs City in their last five games

10.00 PM | FanCode

Nat'l success for Manav, Yashaswini

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

PETROLEUM Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) paddlers Manav Thakkar and Yashaswini Ghorpade clinched their maiden singles titles at the senior national table tennis meet on Saturday. In the men's final, top seed Manav lived up to the expectations with a commanding 4-1 (11-2, 11-4, 6-11, 11-9, 11-3) victory over Jeet Chandra of Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB).

The women's final between Yashaswini and Syndrela Das of PSPB was also a thriller. Yashaswini won 4-3 (11-6, 12-14, 11-5, 9-11, 13-11 6-11 11-8).

EXPRESS READ

Personal best for TN's Rajesh

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Tamil Nadu's 27-year-old quarter-miler Rajesh Ramesh stamped his authority in the 7th Indian Open 400 metre meet on Saturday. Ramesh posted a time of 45.26 seconds, which was better than his personal best of 45.54 seconds posted in 2024. Manu TS representing NCOE Trivandrum finished second in Race A with a time of 45.96 seconds.

Aditi moves to tied-3rd in California

MENLO PARK (CALIFORNIA): Aditi Ashok carded a second round of 6-under 66 to move into tied third alongside World No 1 Jeeno Thitikul of Thailand at the Fortinet Founders Cup. Both Ashok and Thitikul carded rounds of 6-under 66 following their opening even par rounds. Hyo Joo Kim extended her lead as she fired a second round of 2-under 70 to move four shots clear.

Hana, Abhay march into finals

MUMBAI: Hana Moataz and Abhay Singh rose to the occasion with commanding performances to storm into the finals of the JSW Indian Open on Saturday. Second seed Hana (Egypt) beat her third-seeded compatriot Nadien Elhammamy 3-1 (11-8, 5-11, 11-5, 11-7). India's Abhay overcame a strong challenge from Malaysia's Ameeshenraj Chandaran 3-1 (11-9, 9-11, 11-3, 11-8).

Tanvi and Isharani lose in semis

ORLEANS: Shuttler Tanvi Sharma went down in straight games (9-21, 16-21) against former world champ Nozomi Okuhara in the women's singles semifinals of the Orleans Masters here. Later, Isharani Baruah put up a spirited effort, especially in the second game, but came up short against Thailand's Opatiputh Pitchamon. Opatiputh won 21-12, 23-21 in 52 minutes.

AGENCIES @ London

DANNY Welbeck scored twice as Brighton beat Liverpool 2-1 on Saturday to deal a major blow to the Reds' push for a Champions League spot next season. Arne Slot's men came into the match on the sunny south coast in buoyant mood after hammering Galatasaray 4-0 in midweek to reach the Champions League quarterfinals.

But a goal in each half from the evergreen Welbeck gave the home team a fourth win in five Premier League matches, keeping alive their own hopes of European football next season. Liverpool were missing both goal-

keeper Alisson Becker and forward Mohamed Salah at the Amex Stadium.

And they suffered a further injury blow early in the game when top-scorer Hugo Ekitike hobbled off with an apparent dead leg after a firm challenge from former Liverpool stalwart James Milner.

Liverpool are still alive in the Champions League and the FA Cup but face the real prospect of ending the season trophyless, with daunting quarter-finals to come against Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester City.

Fulham edged back ahead of Brighton in eighth and within five points of Liverpool after coming from behind to beat relegation-



Danny Welbeck (L) celebrates after the match | AFP

bound Burnley 3-1. Zian Flemming gave the Claret a shock lead at Craven Cottage, but Fulham hit back through Joshua King and Harry Wilson before Raul Jimenez sealed victory from the penalty spot in stoppage time.

Manchester United held

BOURNEMOUTH: Manchester United's charge towards the Champions League stalled after twice blowing the lead to draw 2-2 at Bournemouth on Friday. Michael Carrick has lost just once in his 10 games since taking charge of the Red Devils, but his team were left hanging on for a point after Harry Maguire's late red card.

Welbeck scores twice to dent Liverpool's top-five hopes in EPL

FOOTBALL ROUND-UP

SIBA MOHANTY @ Bhubaneswar

THE biennial election to Rajya Sabha is over, but the controversy surrounding it refuses to die. Amid horse-trading charges, cross-voting marked the polls in three out of the 10 states which elected 37 members to the Upper House of Parliament.

In Bihar, where the NDA walked away with all five seats, the Congress has slapped show-cause notices on three of its MLAs who abstained from voting, along with a Rashtriya Janata Dal legislator. Their absence led to the defeat of A D Singh, the Mahagathbandhan candidate.

Haryana witnessed a seesaw battle, with the Congress and the BJP winning one seat each, but cross-voting made it a tense affair.

An almost identical story played out in Odisha. Three Congress and eight BJD MLAs cross-voted for BJP-backed candidate Dilip Ray, giving the 72-year-old former Union minister a second Rajya Sabha stint, 25 years after he fashioned a similar victory in 2002.

A stung BJD issued show-cause notices to six MLAs (two others are already under suspension), while the Congress went a step further. First, it suspended three legislators and, a day later, sought disqualification of two of them as members of the Odisha Legislative Assembly. The Congress invoked the Tenth Schedule to the Constitution, seeking their disqualification.

The Rajya Sabha election has, once again, thrown up the big question of defection and the existing legislative and legal frameworks, which work in different ways.

Anti-defection law

Post-Independence Indian politics was marked by rampant defections in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, which led to the introduction of the Tenth Schedule, a legislation that dealt with the crisis political parties faced as elected representatives switched loyalty. It was added by way of the Constitution (52nd Amendment) Act in 1985 and went on to be known as the anti-defection law.

As per the law, there are two grounds on which a member can be disqualified. One, if the member has 'voluntarily given up membership' of the political party he or she belongs to. Second, if he/she votes or abstains from voting in contravention of the direction issued by the party to which the member belongs. This applies both to Parliament and state legislatures. In the case of the latter, the party can condone the voting or abstention within 15 days.

However, exemptions are in place. If two-thirds of the legislators of a party merge with another outfit, it would not attract the defection law. In such a scenario, neither group would be at risk of disqualification as members of the House. The decision to adjudicate the disqualification, as per the law, is vested in the presiding officer of the House — the Chairman or Speaker, in this case.

"If any question arises as to whether a member of a House has become subject to disqualification under this Schedule, the question shall be referred for the decision of the Chairman or, as the case may be, the Speaker of such House, and his decision shall be final," the law says. The Chairman of the House or the Speaker acts as a tribunal under the anti-defection law.

The Tenth Schedule also specifies that no court will have any jurisdiction in respect of any matter connected with the disqualification of a member, making the Chairman's or

Speaker's decision final.

However, the scope of the anti-defection law came under judicial review in the subsequent decades, and the interpretation has widened ever since.

'Voluntarily giving up membership,' the ground for disqualification for defection, was initially linked to resignation by a member, but Supreme Court orders have given it a much broader perspective. Instead of limiting it to resignation, the court has held that the conduct and actions of the member could also be deemed as voluntarily giving up membership. In 2017, the disqualification of Sharad Yadav, former member of Rajya Sabha, by the then Chairman of the Upper House, Venkaiah Naidu, was a case in point.

The JD(U) MP had fallen out with Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar (now elected to the Rajya Sabha) after the latter decided to partner with the BJP by breaking away from the Mahagathbandhan allies. Yadav went on to attend RJD meetings and voiced his dissent against Nitish in public. The Bihar CM submitted a petition to the RS Chairperson and sought Yadav's disqualification on the grounds that he was involved in anti-party activities.

That's what the Odisha Congress cites in its letter seeking disqualification of two of its members. "In this context, reference may be made to the case concerning Shri Sharad Yadav, former Member of Rajya Sabha, where the Hon'ble Chairman of the Rajya Sabha held that by his conduct, public statements and actions against the party's decisions, he had voluntarily given up the membership of the political party on whose ticket he was elected. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has also held that the expression 'voluntarily giving up membership' has a wider connotation and that even in the absence of a formal resignation, such an inference can be drawn from the conduct of a member," the party's petition to the Speaker of the Odisha Legislative Assembly said.

However, the law has been put to the test in a myriad of ways. In March–April 2024, 10 Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) legislators joined the Congress, prompting the former to seek the MLAs' disqualification under the Tenth Schedule. Aggrieved by the Speaker's alleged delay, the BRS knocked on the High Court's doors, and later, the matter ended up with the Supreme Court which, in July 2025, directed Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar to decide the disqualification petitions within three months.

In the Telangana case, the court held that the Speaker did not enjoy constitutional immunity in deciding the disqualification petitions. It also stated that the objective of vesting tribunal powers with the Speaker was to avoid delay and ensure expeditious decisions. Citing Kihoto Hollohan v Zachillhu (1992), the SC ruled that the Speaker, as a tribunal, was bound to decide within a reasonable period. In view of instances of Speakers delaying decisions on disqualification petitions, the top court had recommended that Parliament revisit the provisions of the anti-defection law.

Cross-voting ground for disqualification?

However, Rajya Sabha cross-voting presents a different scenario. In the case of Sharad Yadav, it was his conduct and actions against party decisions which led to the disqualification. The current scenario of cross-voting can be seen from different prisms, one of which is the open ballot system of voting which came into being in 2003.

In fact, after the Rajya Sabha polls in Ma-

harashtra in 1998, the Ethics Committee of the Upper House, headed by S B Chavan, deliberated on the matter and submitted three reports. The panel eventually recommended switching to the open ballot system in Rajya Sabha elections. The Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led government at the Centre accepted the recommendation, and the new voting system came into force.

However, when it was challenged before the Supreme Court in Kuldeep Nayar vs Union of India, the bench held: "Yet, in view of the law laid down in Kihoto Hollohan v. Zachillhu (supra), it is not cor-

CROSS-VOTE DRAMA IN RAJYA SABHA ELECTIONS

rect to contend that the open ballot system tends to expose the members of the Legislative Assembly to disqualification under the Tenth Schedule since that part of the Constitution is meant for different purposes."

In 2012, the Election Commission of India issued a clarification ahead of the Presidential election. The objective was to bring clarity on two issues: one, if a legislator voting in defiance of the party direction would invite disqualification on the grounds of the Tenth Schedule; and two, whether the political party issuing such whips would be liable for penal action.

The EC cited the 'electoral right' of a voter as defined in Section 171A(b) of the Indian Penal Code, which gives a person the right to vote or refrain from voting in an election. "Thus, every elector at the Presidential election has the freedom of making a choice to vote for any of the candidates or not to vote in the election, as per his free will and choice. This will equally apply to the political parties, and they are free to canvass or seek votes of electors for any candidate or request or appeal to them to refrain from voting," the election panel said.

It also made it amply clear that political parties cannot issue directions or whips to their members to vote in a particular manner or not to vote, leaving them with no choice. Such action would amount to the offence of undue influence within the meaning of Section 171C of the IPC, it added.

"A question arose before the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Kuldeep Nayar v Union of India (AIR 2006 SC 3127) whether the provisions of the Tenth Schedule to the Constitution would be attracted in the case of the election to the Rajya Sabha if a member of a State Legislative Assembly votes for a candidate in defiance of



Naveen suspends six party lawmakers

BJD chief Naveen Patnaik on Saturday suspended six of its MLAs for cross-voting during the recent biennial Rajya Sabha elections. The suspended legislators are Chakramani Kanhar, Naba Kishor Mallick, Souvic Biswal, Subasini Jena, Ramakanta Bhoi and Devi Ranjan Tripathy. The party's Political Affairs Committee meeting chaired by Patnaik took the call after it found their replies to the BJD's notice unsatisfactory

Notice illegal, baseless, MLAs told chief whip

Responding to the BJD chief whip's earlier notice on cross-voting, all six MLAs described it as "ex facie, illegal, arbitrary, baseless and unconstitutional and tantamount to committing offences punishable under Section 171 & 174 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023"

the party's directions, where the votes are now given by the system of open voting. The Hon'ble Supreme Court held that an elector would not attract the penal provisions of the Tenth Schedule for having so voted in the Rajya Sabha election," read the EC's note.

Citing the Supreme Court's observations in Pashupati Nath Sukul v Nem Chandra Jain, the EC also clarified that elections to the Rajya Sabha by members of state legisla-

tive assemblies are a non-legislative activity and not a proceeding within the state legislature. This also explains why the Odisha Congress has not sought disqualification of its members on the basis of cross-voting. Also, the fact that the BJD legislators who were slapped with show-cause notices have rejected them and threatened to take legal action, calling the party's move 'illegal, arbitrary and unconstitutional.'

ISSAC JAMES MANAYATH @ Chennai

IN a significant judgment, the Supreme Court struck down a legal provision that denied maternity leave to women who adopted children older than three months. Under Section 60 (4) of the Social Security Code, 2020, an adoptive mother can claim 12 weeks of maternity leave only if the child is less than three months old at the time of adoption.

When the Code came into force on November 21, 2025, the government had presented it as a major reform that brought nine existing social security laws under one umbrella to create "a more comprehensive and inclusive" system of protection for all sections of the workforce, including gig workers.

The law has some 164 sections covering areas such as employee compensation, provident fund, gratuity, and maternity benefits. Sections 59 to 72 deal with various aspects of maternity benefits, with Section 60 specifically addressing the "right to payment of maternity benefit".

In Hamsaanandini Nanduri vs Union of India, the petitioner sought a declaration from the Supreme Court that Section 60(4) of the Social Security Code, 2020, is unconstitutional. Her main argument was that the provision creates an unfair distinction between adoptive mothers, violating the right to equality under Article 14.

Bani Dikshit, the counsel for the petitioner, argued that the distinction created by the legislature between a woman who adopts a child aged less than three months and a woman adopting a child aged three months or older is artificial and violates Article 14.

Countering the petitioner, Assistant Solicitor General K M Nataraj, appearing for the government, argued that once a child is three months old, there is no longer a "same intensive dependency" on the mother as before. Therefore, the adoptive mother can go to work. He argued that Section 60(4) strikes a balance between the rights of adoptive mothers and the concerns of employers.

In its order on March 17, the court sided with the petitioner. A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan said, "We are of the considered view that the distinction

drawn by Section 60(4) of the 2020 Code does not have a rational nexus with the underlying beneficial objective of the statute... While Article 14 of the Constitution permits classification, such classification must rest upon a real and substantial distinction."

The court's reasoning was that the roles,

responsibilities, and caregiving obligations of adoptive mothers are the same regardless of the age of the child at the time of adoption. Therefore, denying maternity leave to adoptive mothers of children over three months of age is discriminatory and violates the right to equality granted by Article 14.

IDENTIFICATION			
SURRENDERED CHILD		ORPHAN OR ABANDONED CHILD	
T (Day 1)	Execution of Surrender Deed by the parent or guardian	T (Day 1)	A child who appears or claims to be an orphan, abandoned or lost shall be brought before the CWC
T+60 days (60 days)	- The parents or guardian who surrendered the child, have two months' time to reconsider their decision - In the meanwhile, the Specialised Adoption Agency, District Child Protection Unit, CWC shall take steps to explore the possibility of parents retaining the child - The SAA shall intimate the CWC in case surrendering parents have not claimed back the child during the reconsideration period	- T+60 days if the child is less than 2 yrs old. (2 months) - T+120 If the child is more than 2 years old. (4 months)	- The CWC shall take efforts to trace the biological parents or legal guardian of the child - If the local police report on the non traceability of biological parents or guardians is not received within the stipulated time, they shall be deemed to be nontraceable
DECLARATION OF LEGALLY FREE FOR ADOPTION			
T+61 days*	- The institution where the child has been placed by the CWC shall bring the case before the CWC on completion of two months - CWC may declare the child legally free for adoption	- T+63 days (3 days) - T+123 days (3 days)	CWC shall declare the child as being legally free for adoption
UPLOAD OF CHILD STUDY REPORT & MEDICAL EXAMINATION REPORT			
T+71 days (10 days)	The Child Study Report (CSR) and Medical Examination Report (MER) shall be prepared and posted on the designated portal	- T+73 days (10 days) - T+133 days (10 days)	The CSR and MER shall be prepared and posted on the designated portal
REFERRAL			
T+71 days*	The child, subject to availability, may be referred to prospective adoptive parents (PAPs) on the basis of seniority on the portal	- T+73 days* - T+133 days*	The child, subject to availability, may be referred to PAPs on the basis of seniority on the portal

*No time period stipulated

Maternity rights

The petitioner argued that by denying the mother "the right to a wholesome and holistic motherhood" and the adopted children "the right to receive sufficient care to be rehabilitated and integrated into the new family", the provision violates the right to life and dignity of both the adoptive mother and the adopted child.

The court agreed that a core objective of maternity leave is to protect the dignity of motherhood by ensuring the child's full and healthy development. It examined the meaning of motherhood in detail.

A key observation was that motherhood is not merely a biological function. In other words, the physical act of giving birth alone does not make one a mother. Parenthood is also defined by care and responsibility, the court held. It quoted poet Fleur Heyliger to stress that the transition into motherhood is a gradual process. "Not flesh of my flesh, nor bone of my bone, But still miraculously my own. Never forget for a single minute, You didn't grow under my heart, but in it."

A key aspect of motherhood to which the court drew attention was the bond a mother shares with her child. "The bond that develops between a mother and her child outside the womb, which is as crucial and intimate as the bond that is formed inside the womb," it observed.

The court further drew on research in developmental studies to underline the importance of early bonding. "The early infancy environment and changes have a lasting effect on the development of the brain in the child. Researchers across the world have observed that infants begin to bond with their mother from the moment of birth, and this social bond continues to provide regulatory emotional functions throughout adulthood," it said.

The court went on to identify three key components of maternity leave: it allows the mother to recover physically after childbirth, gives her time to bond with her child, and to care for the child's physical and emotional needs. "In case of adoption or surrogacy, while the first component is absent, the second and third components are present and significant," the court observed and concluded that the three-month cap deprives adop-

tive mothers of the time needed to fulfil the second and third components, thereby violating their right to dignity under Article 21.

A flawed provision

While the Social Security Code, 2020, grants the right to maternity leave to adoptive mothers of children under three months of age, the lengthy adoption process in India means that completing adoption when the child is still under three months of age is nearly impractical (see table).

The petitioner argued that the process typically takes two months or more, and by the time the child is handed over, the statutory age limit is likely to have been crossed.

Noting the concern raised by the petitioner, the court observed that when a beneficial legislation is framed in a way that prevents the intended beneficiaries from actually receiving its benefits, it ceases to serve its social purpose. "The legislature, while enacting a statute, bears the responsibility of ensuring that the law it enacts is capable of being implemented," it said.

Paternity leave

The court also urged the government to come up with a provision recognising paternity leave as a social security benefit. "Parenthood is not a solitary function performed by one parent but rather a shared responsibility in which each parent contributes to the child's holistic development," the court noted.

Apart from reinforcing gendered roles in parenting, the absence of paternity leave is also problematic from a child welfare perspective. The presence of a father contributes significantly to a child's emotional and psychological well-being during the early stages of life, the court noted. "The realisation that one of its parents arrived a little late to the story because the law required him to be present at work is something the child may never consciously know, yet the quiet cost of that absence is later reflected in their relationship," the court noted.

Sections 43A and 43AA of the CCS (Leave) Rules grant 15 days of paternity leave to male government employees. There are no such provisions for those in the private sector. The Social Security Code, 2020, is silent on it.